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UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

A WAR DRAMA
IN FOUR ACTS.

BY CHRISTIAN REID

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THE PERSONS IN THE PLAY.

General Dering, C. S. A.
Gordon Beverley, his Chief of Staff.
Jack Warrington, commanding cavalry legion
called Warrington's Light Horse.
Lieutenant Forrest, A. D. C. to General Dering.
George Stone, a neighbor of the Warringtons.
Captain Porter, U. S. A.
Mrs. Warrington, mother of Jack.
Marion Warrington, her daughter.
Kate Conyers, her niece.
Ned, a young negro of ante bellum type.
Mom Elsie, a faithful family servant.
Soldiers, scouts, surgeon, etc.

ACT FIRST.

The Garden of Warrington Court, an old Southern mansion in the country.

(A day elapses).

ACT SECOND.

Miller's Farm-house, occupied by Northern troops.

(A day elapses).

ACT THIRD.

SCENE I. Woods near Confederate camp.

SCENE II. Confederate camp.

(An hour or two elapses).

ACT FOURTH.

Drawing-room of Warrington Court.

TIME: Summer 1863.

MUSIC REQUIRED.

OVERTURE.

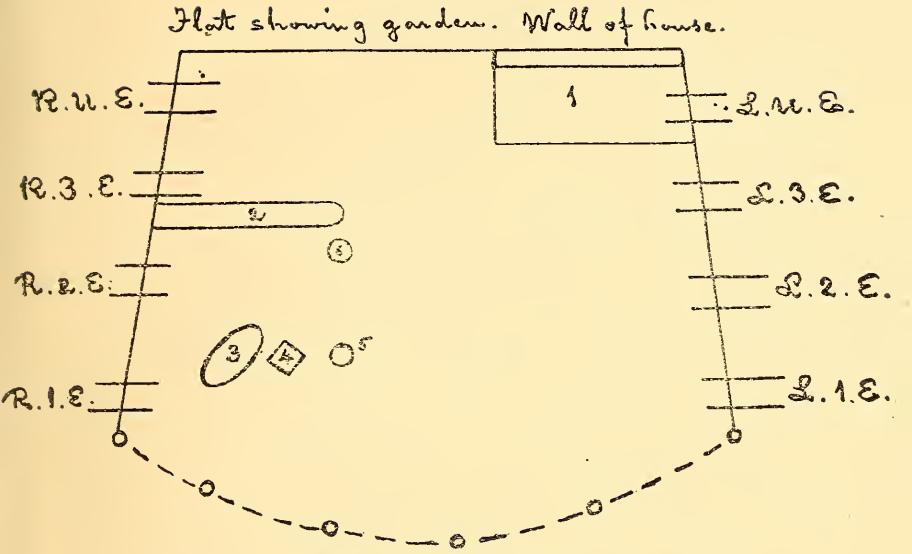
A medley of familiar Southern airs, current during the war, such as, "The Bonnie Blue Flag," "My Maryland," "Old Folks at Home," etc. Ending with "Dixie," to the strains of which the curtain should rise.

INCIDENTAL.

After first act, medley of the airs of songs sung in this act. After second, martial music, to prepare for next act. After third act a stirring march should be played. If the orchestra can accompany the singing of the last verse of "The Cavalier's Glee" in this act, it will be well, but is not necessary. After curtain has gone down finally, "Dixie" should again be played.

SCENE PLOT.

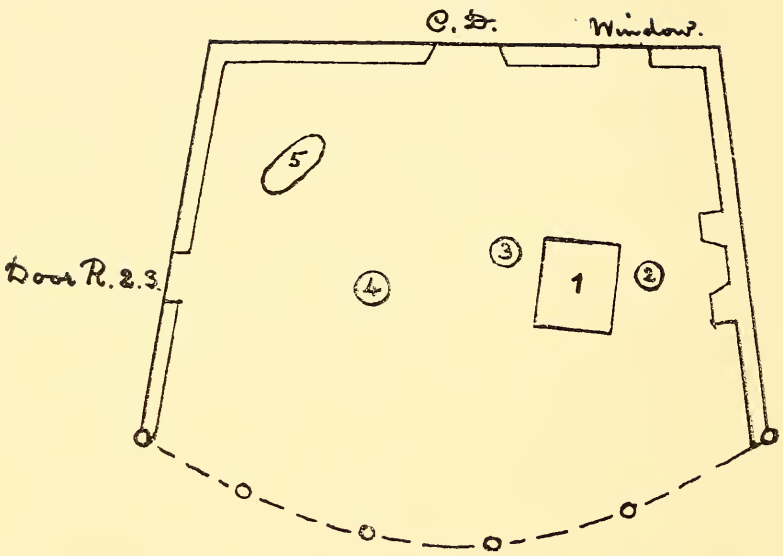
ACT FIRST.



1. End of portico of house. 2. Trellis. 3. Seat under trellised arch. 4. Table. 5. Chair. 6. Chair.

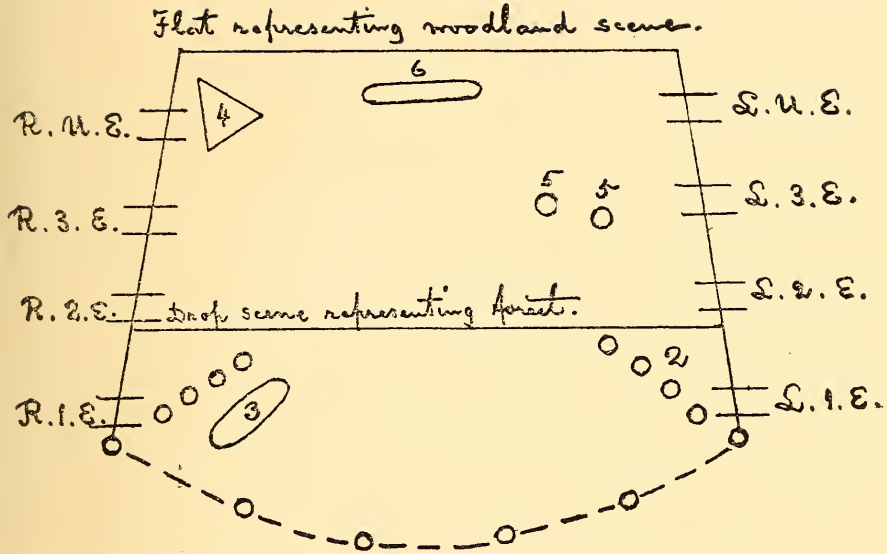
SCENE.—The garden of Warrington Court, planted, not too thickly, with flowers and blossoming shrubs. The back-cloth is painted to show garden vistas, but about one-third of it is cut off by representation of the wall of the house, only the corner of which is supposed to show. It should be white, with one, or possibly two, green-shuttered windows. The end of the portico (1) a platform, with Corinthian columns at L. U. E., is elevated one or two steps above the level of the stage. A trellis (2) covered with vines extends five or six feet from R. 3 E. Farther down stage on right stands a trellised, rose-covered arch, under which is a rustic seat, large enough for two persons. A rustic table (4) stands in front of this and a rustic chair (5) is placed on left side of table. Another rustic chair (6) stands back near trellis.

Act Second.



1. Table. 2. 3. 4. Chairs. 5. Spinning-wheel. 6. Fire-place.

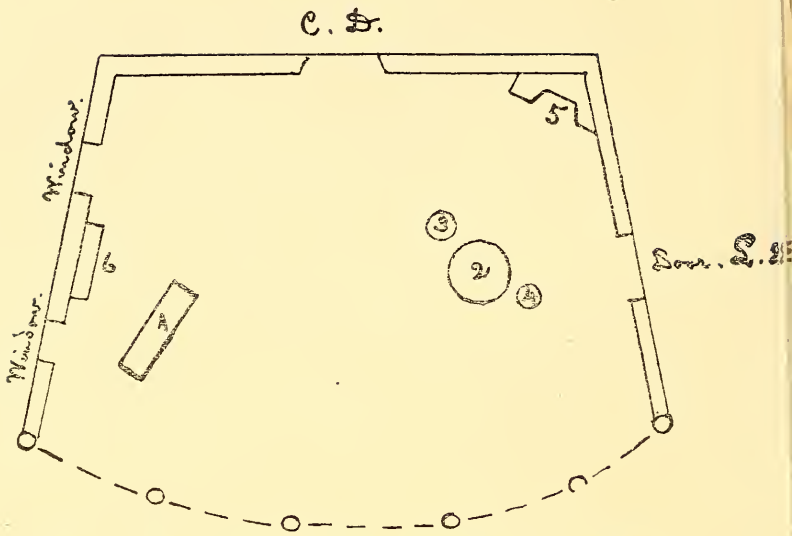
Scene.—A room in a farm-house very roughly furnished. Door at centre in flat and also at R. 2 E. Window without curtains, able to open, at L. C. A table (1) has writing materials on it. On chair (2) Yankee officer is seated, facing table. On chair (3) Stone sits, facing audience. Chair (4) is placed in this position for Marion by Ned when she enters. A spinning-wheel (5) stands in upper right corner. A large fire-place, with plain mantel is at L. 2 E.



1 and 2. Thickets. 3. Log. 4. Tent. 5. Stumps—or any other natural objects that would serve as seats. 6. Log.

SCENE FIRST.—A forest glade, with drop-scene representing forest. Thickets of small pines or cedars conceal right and left entrances. Immediately in front of thicket on right is a log. In this glade the first scene of act takes place. After characters have left stage, drop-scene should slowly rise, disclosing—

SCENE SECOND.—Confederate camp. The flat at back represents some wild, natural scene, and there should be a few trees to give the appearance of woods. At R. U. E. stands tent of General Dering. On left are placed two or more stumps (5) and a log, or some rocks, (6) at back. These serve as seats for soldiers at first and afterwards for other characters.



1. Couch. 2. Table. 3. Large arm-chair. 4. Smaller chair. 5. Fire-place. 6. Pier-table and mirror.

SCENE.—Drawing-room of Warrington Court, furnished in the style of the middle of the century. There must be enough furniture to prevent the room from looking empty, but care must be taken not to crowd it. A wide door is at centre of flat with old portraits hanging in middle of wall on either side of it, and a chair or two beneath them. On right of stage is a long, modern couch (1) without back. On left is a round mahogany table (2) of Colonial model. Beside this stands a large arm-chair (3) and on the other side a smaller chair (4). In left corner is a tall, carved mantel (5) bearing clock (the hands of which point to seven) candelabra and vases. A bell-cord hangs by door on left. Between windows on right stands a massive old-fashioned pier-table (6) with mirror above it.

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

ACT FIRST.

SCENE.—*The garden of Warrington Court, set with many plants and flowering shrubs. On left is seen a corner of the house, an old-fashioned Southern mansion, with white-columned portico. On right is a vine-covered trellis. Also on right, but further down stage, is a trellised arch overhung with roses. Under this is placed a rustic bench and table. Near by stands a rustic chair. Another rustic chair is placed beside farther trellis. For details of position, see scene plot. The light is that of a summer afternoon.*

MARION WARRINGTON *is discovered, seated on bench under trellis. She has a large half-knitted sock in her hands and is attempting to knit while reading a book which lies open before her on the table.* KATE CONYERS *sits in chair on left side of table and has a finished sock in her hands. Both girls are young, pretty, high-bred in appearance typical of the best social class of the old South. They are simply, but prettily dressed in the fashion of the time—gauzy, billowy gowns of delicately tinted muslin, with bare arms and neck. Both wear their hair dressed in a low knot at the back of the head, while one or two long, loose curls fall over the bare, white shoulders.*

KATE (*taking needles from her sock and spreading it out on her knee*). There!—that makes another pair, the fourth I've finished this week! How many have you finished, Marion?

MARION (*looking up from book with start*). How many have I—what Kate?

KATE. Why, how many pairs of socks have you finished? You know Aunt Lucy wants to send a box to the army very soon.

MARION (*looking guilty and beginning to knit very fast*). Oh, I haven't finished one pair yet this week. I don't knit very fast, you know. I drop so many stitches and have to take out so much. There's a stitch dropped now, I see! (*pulls out needles petulantly and begins to ravel*). I don't believe I shall ever finish this sock!

KATE (*watching her*). It isn't surprising that you don't get on very fast, or that you drop stitches either. You can't knit and read at the same time.

MARION. Mama can. I've seen her do it, and that's what made me think of trying. I want to finish this novel—I'm at such an interesting point.

KATE. What is it?

MARION (*with a sigh*). "Henry Esmond." What wouldn't you give for a *new* novel, Kate? I wanted one so badly that I had to get an old one, so I went into the library and found this. I never read it before, and it's very interesting. I like Beatrix so much!

KATE (*dryly*). I don't wonder. You resemble her.

MARION (*highly flattered*). Do you think so? How flattering!

KATE. I don't see anything flattering in saying that

you resemble a heartless coquette. But instead of reading about Beatrix, you had better be knitting socks. Because Aunt Lucy knits and reads at the same time is no reason that you can. *She* can do anything—and she's always doing something for the soldiers. They are on her mind continually, as they should be on the minds of all of us. Since we can't fight, we women, we ought to work for the men who can.

MARION. I'm sure we do. I'm working now.

KATE (*sarcastically*). Very hard. How many pairs of socks have you knitted during the past month?

MARION (*with dignity*). Knitting socks isn't all there is to do. I've made and embroidered three tobacco-bags.

KATE (*still sarcastically*). For your admirers! That was more agreeable work than wearing out one's fingers knitting socks, but I don't think it was quite so useful. A tobacco-bag won't do much towards keeping a man's feet dry.

MARION (*smiling*). But it will keep his heart warm—at least that's what they all said when they received them.

KATE. Who are "they?"

MARION (*carelessly*). Gordon Beverley first, —

KATE. I hope he's properly grateful for being first, even if he isn't alone.

MARION. Of course he's grateful. He would be grateful for anything from me. Then Lieutenant Forrest—

KATE. Aren't you ashamed to make each of those men believe that you are thinking about him in particular?

MARION. I don't. I try to make them understand that I think about them collectively. But if they should believe otherwise there's no harm done. The belief makes them

happy, and men fight better when they are happy. So I feel that I have done my little share towards inspiring and making heroes of them.

KATE. This is the first time I have heard flirtation exalted into a patriotic duty.

MARION. You can't deny it's a good view of it. There are three men happier for my tobacco-bags, which is more than you have accomplished with all your socks.

KATE. Three men! You've only mentioned two. Who is the third?

MARION (*a little defiantly*). George Stone.

KATE. George Stone! Well, you haven't done much towards inspiring and making a hero of *him!*

MARION. How unkind you are about poor George! It's not his fault that he isn't a soldier. He says he would like to go into the army, but you know his father is in wretched health, so there's nobody but George to look after things at home.

KATE. There's nobody here—if you mean any man. But Jack doesn't stay at home on that account.

MARION. Oh—Jack! He's different. You'd have to tie Jack to keep him at home.

KATE. I should hope so—or any other man who is a man. Why can't Mrs. Stone do what Aunt Lucy does—look after the plantation herself?

MARION. Mrs. Stone is a Northern woman, you know; and George feels as if he ought not to fight against her people.

KATE. Then he should go and live with them! We don't want such men here! I don't trust George Stone, Marion. I 'm sure he is a coward, and I shouldn't be at all

surprised if he were a spy. I don't see how you can be so friendly, and flirt with him as you do.

MARION (*indignantly*). I don't flirt with him.

KATE (*positively*). You do—outrageously. If Gordon Beverley knew of it he would be very angry.

MARION (*still indignant*). Gordon Beverley has no right to be angry at anything I choose to do.

KATE. You have given him a right by your encouragement. And you know that you care for him.

MARION. I don't know anything of the kind.

KATE. Then you shouldn't make him believe that you care.

MARION. I don't make him believe it.

KATE. You certainly do.

MARION. I 'll—I 'll prove to you that I don't when I see him again.

KATE. That may easily be never.

MARION (*catching her breath*). Ah!

(*They are silent, both looking downcast and sorrowful. Enter* GEORGE STONE *from house. He is a young man, good-looking, dressed in civilian's costume and has the appearance and manners of a gentleman. He descends veranda steps and comes forward with the easy assurance of an old friend.*)

STONE. Good-day, young ladies. Mrs. Warrington told me I would find you here.

KATE (*coldly, without rising*). Good-day, Mr. Stone.

MARION (*rising, coming forward and offering her hand warmly*). How do you do, George. Yes, of course we are here—it's so much pleasanter than in the house. And very

glad to see you. In fact you have just come in time to keep Kate and me from quarrelling.

STONE (*looking at Kate, as if with a desire to propitiate her*). I 'll be delighted to act us peace-maker. What is the ground of quarrel?

KATE (*rolling up her knitting and rising*). Only a radical difference of taste, Mr. Stone.

(*She walks up stage to trellis and begins to arrange and tie up some of the vines. Stone looks after her.*)

STONE. She 's not very polite, Miss Kate! It's clear she doesn't like me, but (*sitting in vacant chair*) I don't mind that as long as she 's good enough to go away and leave me alone with you.

MARION (*sitting again and beginning to knit*). Well, you see Kate doesn't particularly care for any man who isn't a soldier. It's a pity you aren't a soldier.

STONE (*carelessly*). It isn't a pity as far as her caring for me is concerned, for I don't want her to care for me. But (*leaning forward*) if it would make you like me better I—I'd be ready to put on the gray uniform to-morrow.

MARION. A girl's caring seems rather a poor reason for putting it on. If you would do it for me, why don't you do it for your country?

STONE. This isn't my—I mean—you know why I don't. My people can't get on without me.

MARION. We get on without any man. Papa and Jack have been gone, as you know, ever since the first of the war, but mamma manages everything and has no trouble.

STONE. That 's all very well as long as you 're within the Confederate lines; but when the enemy comes, the

negroes will no longer obey your mother, there will be nobody to protect you, and—

MARION (*scornfully*). When the enemy comes! Do you think the Yankees are likely to get here, with our men between us and them?

STONE (*confidently*). They have got to other places, and I 'm sure they will be here soon.

MARION (*looking at him intently*). Why are you sure? How do you know?

STONE (*hastily*). Of course I don't know. I only think it probable. (*Rises and takes seat by her side*). In fact I don't mind prophecying that they will be here within a few days—perhaps sooner. And when they come you'll need protection. Your Confederate soldiers can do you no good then. But *I* can. It will be my turn, and I will do everything possible for you if—(*places hand on hers*) if you'll only be kind and promise to love me a little!

(MARION *looks at him, as if in speechless indignation, and drawing hand from him rises, addressing him very coldly*):

MARION. I don't understand why you should have more power to protect us than any other Southern man. If you are true to the South you haven't got such power. If you are not true—(*she pauses*). You have known me all your life, George Stone, but it hasn't been to much purpose if you don't know that I would suffer anything at the hands of the Yankees rather than accept the protection of a—

STONE (*who has risen when she does*). Marion!

MARION (*passionately*). I don't want to say the word! I don't want even to think of applying it to you, George!

(*Holds out her hands appealingly*). We were play-fellows when we were children, we have been friends all our lives.

STONE (*attempting to take her hand*). I've been your lover, Marion—always.

MARION (*in a tone of protest, warding him off*). I don't want to know it. I only want to remember our old friendship. Oh, George, it can't be (*lays her hand on his arm*) that you are not true to the South!

STONE (*resentfully*). You have no right to doubt it. But I know who has put the suspicion into your mind. (*He glances at Kate*). I'll remember it, too. Of course I'm true to the South! But I shall have power to help you if the Yankees come simply because my mother has some relatives with them. The general commanding the corps which will be here is—her cousin.

MARION (*shocked*). Oh, how dreadful!

STONE (*smiling*). It won't be very dreadful for me—when they come.

MARION. If he were my cousin I'd rather die than acknowledge him—coming to ravage our country and slay our men and take away our rights!

STONE (*shrugging his shoulders*). Such conduct wouldn't go far towards saving one's property. No, no. It isn't bad I can tell you, to have friends on both sides. And I'll use mine to protect you, if—if you let me.

MARION (*disdainfully*). You are very kind indeed. But I prefer to trust to our own soldiers for protection. (*She turns away and exclaims*): Why, yonder's mamma! She must have heard something!

(*Enter* MRS. WARRINGTON *from house. She is a charming-looking woman of about forty-five, with manners*

of unaffected grace and dignity. Her hair is perhaps a little gray and she wears a trifle of a lace cap on it, but her complexion is fresh and her whole appearance is that of a woman who has always been loved, sheltered, deferred to, yet whom this deference has not weakened, who rules her household like a queen, but is loved as well as she is obeyed. She wears a gown of some dark fabric, with a lace fichu, and open sleeves show her fair, round arms. She carries a fan, and comes forward with an air of excitement. MARION *and* KATE *hasten toward her. She addresses them eagerly):*

MRS. W. Girls, I have great news!

MARION. From the army?

KATE. Oh, what is it?

MRS. W. Dering's Brigade has advanced into this neighborhood and the general has sent word that he will make his headquarters with us.

MARION (*clasping her hands*). How delightful! Gordon Beverley is his chief of staff.

KATE. And Jack's Light Horse is in his brigade!

MRS. W. Yes, Jack will be able to see us. It is an unexpected happiness. We may look for the general very soon. The aide who brought the message said he would follow almost immediately and I've been too busy ever since to think of telling you.

KATE (*reproachfully*). Why didn't you call us to help you?

MRS. W. I had no need of you. The servants know better than you what is to be done—but something must have been forgotten, for here is Mom Elsie.

(*Enter* MOM ELSIE *from house. She is a middle-aged woman, of a chocolate-brown, or little lighter color. Has good features, is erect and dignified, wears crisp skirts, a long white apron, spotless white kerchief about her neck and white or bright-colored turban on her head. She has the air of one who has always been accustomed to consideration and to speaking her mind freely*).

MOM ELSIE. Is you gwine to give de Gen'l your sho 'nuff coffee, Miss Lucy?

MRS. W. Of course. You don't think I would give him the decoction of rye that we drink every day?

MOM ELSIE (*doubtfully*). Dere 's mighty little lef' o' dat coffee, Miss Lucy, an' Mass Tom might be comin' home some day.

MRS. W. God grant that he may! But he 'd be the first to say use the coffee now, and you know it.

MOM ELSIE (*still reluctantly*). But Mass Jack might be comin' too, an' he 's powe'ful fond of coffee is Mass Jack.

KATE (*seizing her*). But Jack is coming now—*now*—don't you know it? So you must make the coffee for him, Mom Elsie, and make it nice and strong!

MOM ELSIE (*delighted*). I will, chile, I will! I knows jes' how he likes it. (*Turns to Mrs. W.*) An' de loaf-sugar, Miss Lucy? If you gives 'em coffee, you 'll have to give 'em loaf-sugar, too.

MRS. W. We will give them everything that we have—everything! After they are gone it doesn't matter how we live—Oh! (*She starts and looks eagerly towards house.*) Who is that? Jack!

(*She rushes eagerly forward as* JACK WARRINGTON *emerges from house. He is a gallant dashing-looking young fellow in his early twenties. He wears cavalry uniform—gray, with yellow facing and stripes, the short cavalry jacket and high riding boots. Mrs. Warrington throws her arms about him, Marion and Kate also embrace him, while Mom Elsie pats him on the back. He puts his arms about them all, and then turns and hugs Mom Elsie*).

JACK. What a glorious thing to have a glimpse of home again! When we got orders to march in this direction, I shouted for joy. How well you are all looking! (*Glances around at them, and then smiles mischieviously at Mom Elsie*). And as for Mom Elsie, she gets younger every day.

MOM ELSIE (*beaming*). G' long, Mass Jack! You always was de impidentest boy! Now I mus' go an' get out dat coffee. (*Exit hastily into house*).

MARION (*aside to Jack*). Don't you see George Stone?

JACK (*aside to Marion*). I don't particularly care about seeing him. Nevertheless,—(*he advances with outstretched hand, but somewhat stiff manner, to where Stone has remained, half-standing, half-sitting on edge of table*). How are you George?

STONE (*as they shake hands*). How are you, Jack? Glad to see you looking so well.

JACK (*carelessly*). Yes, thanks—I haven't been winged yet by a Yankee bullet. You haven't given them a chance at you, I believe?

STONE (*stiffly*). I have not found it possible to leave home.

JACK (*drily*). So it appears. (*He turns to Mrs. Warrington*). Mother, have you heard that the general is coming to make his headquarters here? I hope you are ready for him?

MRS. W. Perfectly, my dear boy, and charmed to have him. (*Looks toward house*). Ah, there he is now—coming out here! It is too bad there was nobody in the house to receive him!

(*She advances toward the house, where* NED *appears on veranda, ushering* GENERAL DERING *and two other officers into the garden.* NED *is a good-looking, intelligent boy of nineteen or twenty, of about the same color as Mom Elsie,* (*anything like a negro-minstrel appearance should be carefully avoided for these characters*), *well-dressed and with a great deal of manner, as ante-bellum servants, brought up in the master's house, always had. He ushers out the officers with this manner.* GEN. DERING *is a man of about thirty-five, tall, handsome, with military bearing, wears a brigadier-general's cavalry uniform, with yellow, silk sash, and a hat looped up on one side with a black plume. With him are* CAPTAIN BEVERLEY, *his chief of staff, a slender, handsome young officer; and* LIEUT. FORREST, *also quite young. Both are in uniform, and having just dismounted wear their belts, pistols and swords. All have their hair parted at the side and wear a beard of some kind—the young officers moustaches, the general also an imperial.*

NED. Yes, sah. De ladies is in de gyahden, sah.

MRS. W. (*extending her hand*). My dear General, I am

sorry you have had to come in search of us, but I am delighted to see you.

GEN. DERING (*bowing over her hand*). So that we find you at last, my dear Mrs. Warrington, no distance would be too far to seek you. I hope I don't inconvenience you by calling on your hospitality!

MRS. W. I would not forgive you if you failed to do so. Warrington Court is honored by any service a Confederate general demands of it.

GEN. No service has ever been demanded of Warrington Court to which it has not nobly responded. You know, I believe, these members of my staff, (*he indicates them*), Captain Beverley and Lieut. Forrest.

MRS. W. (*extending her hand to the young men, who both bow over it*). Very well indeed. And you, General, know my daughter and my niece, Miss Conyers?

GEN. I have met the young ladies before and am charmed to renew my acquaintance with them. (*He shakes hands with Marion and Kate*).

MRS. W. (*turning toward Stone*). And here is one of our neighbors, Mr. George Stone.

GEN. (*glancing over Stone, noting his citizen's dress, and speaking a little coldly*). Ah! How do you do, Mr. Stone.

(STONE *bows without speaking and then walks away. He goes up stage and disappears behind the trellis covered with vines. The rest pay no attention to him. The girls and young officers talk gaily together in background, while* MRS. WARRINGTON *and* GEN. DERING *advance to front of stage, and sit in chairs, one of which the General draws forward*).

GEN. (*glancing around*). You have beautiful gardens here, Mrs. Warrington.

MRS. W. The Warrington Court gardens have been famous for a hundred years, general.

GEN. (*very gravely*). I hope you may not have to see them ravaged by the enemy.

MRS. W. (*anxiously*). Is there danger of that?

GEN. You are such a brave woman that I may tell you frankly there is great danger of it. The armies on both sides are converging to this point, and if we fall back—as for military reasons we may be obliged to do—this lovely old place will be left unprotected and will certainly be ravaged by a foe who respects nothing.

MRS. W. We will suffer in seeing it, but it will have to be counted with the other sacrifices, over which no Southern man or woman hesitates.

GEN. One of my reasons for coming here to-day was to warn you of this, and to urge you to go with us, if we are forced to fall back, leaving your plantation outside our lines.

MRS. W. (*quietly*). You are very kind, but this is my post of duty and I cannot leave it.

GEN. I am sure that Gen. Warrington would wish that you should do so.

MRS. W. I think not. As he would not under any circumstances abandon his own post, so he would expect me to remain at mine.

GEN. What can you accomplish by remaining?

MRS. W. Much, I hope. If this house is abandoned it will certainly be destroyed. But if I remain I may save it.

If there is even a chance of doing so, I must take that chance, for the sake of my husband and children

GEN. You will be exposed to indignities, insults, perhaps even injuries.

MRS. W. (*rising*). You are exposed to death, general, when you go into battle, but you don't remain away on that account. So, whatever the danger here, I shall stay. I should feel like a deserter and a coward if while my husband fights his country's battles, I had not courage enough to guard his home

GEN. (*much moved and rising also*). Madam, I beg pardon for suggesting flight to such a dauntless spirit. The courage which takes me or any other soldier into battle is, I believe, less than that which holds you at your post of duty. But these young ladies—will you keep them with you?

MRS. W. (*doubtfully*). I cannot tell—I must consider—is there immediate need to decide?

GEN. I hope not, but we cannot tell—the movements of the enemy are uncertain, and ours depend on theirs.

MRS. W. (*making an effort to be cheerful*). Then let us forget it all for a little while. We are here together to-day, old friends who may not meet soon again, if—if ever. To enjoy the passing hour is a philosophy one learns in war. It is so only that we women can live.

GEN. My admiration of your philosophy is only second to my admiration of yourself. Be kind enough, then, to show me these beautiful grounds of yours.

(*He offers his arm*, MRS. WARRINGTON *takes it and they go off, disappearing behind shrubbery, at first exit on left. Meanwhile, during this conversation the group*

in rear has separated. KATE *and* JACK *have fallen apart from others and stand talking by trellis,* KATE *still handling the vines, while* JACK *leaning against trellis looks at and talks to her.* MARION *and the other two young men, stroll off stage behind trellis, disappearing for a moment or two as if wandering in garden, then reappear, as* MRS. WARRINGTON *and the general go off, glance with significant smiles at* KATE *and* JACK, *and going over to portico sit down on steps—that is,* MARION *sits, and* BEVERLEY *sits beside her, while* FOREEST *stands for a time at least leaning against column of portico. They talk together easily and naturally in low tones, while* KATE *and* JACK *move down to arch, where* KATE *half-absently continues her work with the roses).*

KATE (*anxiously*). And do you think the Yankees are really so close that you may have to go away again immediately?

JACK (*sitting on edge of table*). Our scouts report them very near. I hope we shall make a stand in this neighborhood, but if our orders are to fall back, we must obey—though it will be terribly hard to leave this dear old place within their lines.

KATE. And how about us? Aren't you more sorry to leave us than to leave the dear old place?

JACK (*in surprise*). Why of course we'll take all of you with us.

KATE (*shaking her head*). No, you will not. Aunt Lucy has decided that even if the Yankees come, she will stay here, and Marion and I will stay with her.

JACK (*vehemently*). Oh, that will never do! It can't be

allowed. I must speak to my mother. But even if she insists on staying, *you* musn't do so. I won't hear of it.

KATE (*coolly*). You 'll not only hear of it, but see it done. (*Pulls a rose*). I 'd stay with Aunt Lucy if fifty thousand Yankees came! You ought to know that.

JACK. I know you are as brave as a lion, and as obstinate as—as an animal that isn't a lion! (*She playfully strikes him with the rose*). But you ought to consider me a little. How can I fight without a glimpse of you now and then, and how can I get a glimpse with a lot of damned Yankees between us?

KATE (*sweetly*). Don't be profane, dear boy! You 'll have to drive the Yankees away—you haven't found that very hard to do so far. (*She moves to seat on bench*). And while you are doing it, I 'll stand on the roof and show myself to inspirit you—as ladies in the days of chivalry showed themselves to their knights, you know.

JACK (*rising*). I hope you 'll do nothing of the kind. You would only make me nervous, and probably get shot yourself. There weren't any such things as bullets in the days of chivalry. Under such circumstances, the proper place for you would be the cellar.

KATE (*scornfully*). The cellar! How very heroic!

JACK (*sitting beside her*). Possibly not heroic, but safe—and that's what I 'm thinking of so far as you are concerned. (*Takes her hands*). Ah, Kate, my Kate, 'the daintiest Kate in Christendom,' it isn't necessary for you to show yourself in order to make my heart stout to fight for you. You made it that long since when you gave me your love.

KATE (*very tenderly*). You made my heart stout, also,

for a fight almost as hard as yours—the woman's fight of waiting and endurance.

JACK (*kissing one of her hands*). Dear girl, this brave and faithful heart of yours needs nothing to make it more stout. There is no fight so hard your courage would not mount to it.

KATE. You flatter—no, no, this is not time for jesting! I 'm sure you don't flatter, but you think too well of me.

JACK. That's a sheer impossibility. I couldn't think too well of you! Haven't I known you always and loved you as long as I have known you?

KATE (*gently*). Of the knowing there is no doubt, and for the loving—well, it pleases me to believe that, too.

JACK. You dare not doubt it. Has there ever been a time since you came here first—poor, little orphan child!—that I have not been your knight and servant?

KATE (*laughing*). Many times, I think, when it was the other way, as far as service went. But what greater kindness can you do a woman than just to let her serve you? It is what we came into the world for. So when you let me trot after you and wait on you, you were winning my heart more surely than by any other means. We may have quarreled sometimes, but if so, I forget it. (*Very sweetly*). All that I remember since you went to war, dear Jack, is how kind you always were and how much I love you!

JACK (*passionately*). Oh, if one had a hundred lives, they would not be too much to give for the land that bears such women!

KATE. The women must be worthy of its men. We dare not fall below our heroes.

JACK. You would make heroes out of clods!

KATE. No, we can't make heroes out of clods—not yet (*she glances around to see if George Stone is within hearing, and then finishes significantly*) out of Stones.

JACK (*with disgust*). I grant it would be pretty hard to make a hero out of that particular Stone. What is he doing here, by the way?

KATE You've heard the old saying, "For want of company, welcome trumpery," haven't you?

JACK. To be sure. But you—

KATE. Oh, I'm not the person who welcomes the trumpery. It's Marion. She can't live without some one to flirt with, and since every man in the neighborhood has become a soldier except George Stone, why, as a matter of course, she flirts with George Stone.

JACK (*indignantly*). She ought to be ashamed of herself. He's a coward!

KATE. I hope he may prove to be no worse, but be careful, Jack! Say nothing before him which you would not wish the enemy to know.

JACK (*violently*). If I thought that of him I'd—

KATE (*putting her hand on his arm*). Sssh! Don't talk so loud! I have no real ground for my opinion. It's only a suspicion and may be unjust. But now (*rising*) let us do a good turn to poor Captain Beverley by taking Lieutenant Forrest away so that he can have an opportunity to talk to Marion.

JACK (*sitting still*). I don't see why I should do a good turn to Beverley by doing an ill turn to Forrest. Let them fight it out. I want to talk to you.

KATE (*coaxingly*). And so you shall, after awhile. But

let us be charitable and do this for Gordon Beverley. I know he is dying to say a few words to Marion alone, and Lieut. Forrest will never think of effacing himself. We must drag him away. Come!

JACK (*rising reluctantly*). Why should we drag him away? I don't care—

KATE (*compellingly*). Come! (*She draws him with her, as she goes up to the others, who all rise, while she addresses Forrest*). Lieut. Forrest, I have been told so much of your singing that I am very anxious to have the pleasure of hearing you.

FORREST (*highly flattered*). Ah–um—You're too good, Miss Conyers. I'm afraid Warrington has been saying too much about my singing.

JACK (*sulkily*). I assure you I haven't.

KATE. I've heard of your voice from others beside Jack. Do come to the piano and sing something for us.

BEVERLEY (*warmly*). Yes, do, Forrest! Sing *all* your songs. We'll enjoy them so much.

FORREST (*clearing his throat*). I'm rather hoarse—there was so much dust on the road to-day. But I'll try what I can do—if you really think you care about it. (*He looks at Marion.*)

MARION. Oh, we'll be charmed.

FORREST. Then I'll sing—for you.

(*He says the last words aside to her, then goes with* KATE *toward the house.* KATE *turns and beckons* JACK, *who with an air of vexation follows sulkily.* MARION *and* BEVERLEY *look after them smiling, then turn and walk slowly toward the seat under the trellis.*)

BEVERLEY. That was awfully good of Jack to get Forrest

away and give me a chance to talk to you! Moments are precious when one may have so few of them.

MARION (*demurely*). I doubt if Jack had much to do with it. I fancy it was Kate's work. She had a reason for desiring to hear Lieut. Forrest sing just now.

BEVERLEY. It was a desire that chimed in wonderfully well with mine, and I owe her many thanks for it.

MARION. Don't be in too much haste about paying them. We can't always tell exactly what to be grateful for, you know.

BEVERLEY (*impetuously*). I know—

(*He pauses as* FORREST'S *voice in house rises, singing,* "*Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still.*" MARION *makes a motion with her hand to silence him and sitting down on bench appears to listen to the song with pleasure.* BEVERLEY, *on the contrary, is impatient. He takes off his sword and lays it across the table, then sits on arm of bench and would like to talk, but* MARION *again makes motion silencing him until verse is ended. Then voice ceases and with an air of relief* BEVERLEY *sits down beside her on bench.*)

BEVERLEY. If you could only imagine what happiness it is to me to be here alone with you in this ideal spot you would understand that I know very well what to be grateful for.

MARION (*lightly*). Oh, I don't doubt that you think you know very well, but—there's a bare possibility you may be mistaken. You'll admit that, I'm sure.

BEVERLEY. I'll admit nothing of the kind. To be here with you is simply paradise. I can't be too grateful for it.

I can't—(*Forrest begins to sing* "*Lorena.*") Confound that fellow! Isn't he ever going to stop?

MARION. You told him to sing all his songs. How many does he know?

BEVERLEY. About half a hundred. I hope Jack will choke him off. (*Forrest stops at the end of the first verse*). Good! Jack *has* choked him off!

MARION (*mischievously*). No doubt he will come back now to be thanked and complimented.

BEVERLEY. If he does, I'll shoot him! It's no time to stand on considerations of friendship. I must talk to you!

MARION (*with an air of wonder*). But it strikes me that you have been talking to me ever since you came!

BEVERLEY. You know what I mean. I want to ask you if—if you have thought of me while I was away?

MARION. Oh, dear, yes. I think of all my friends—now and then.

BEVERLEY (*crestfallen*). There isn't much comfort in being thought of together with all your friends—now and then. I would like you to think of me alone, and all the time.

MARION (*laughing*). You are reasonable, I declare. If I thought of you alone and all the time, when could I think of any one else?

BEVERLEY. Why should you think of any one else. I think only of you.

MARION (*still laughing*). How very kind of you! But you see I have a good many other persons to think of, and I can't be so—exclusive.

BEVERLEY (*growing cold*). No, it's plain you can't be exclusive. I'm afraid you have no heart, Miss Warrington.

MARION *(coldly also).* I don't think that you are a very good judge of that, Captain Beverley.

BEVERLEY. I consider that I am a very good judge. I have been trying to find it long enough, and now I think that the only wise thing to do is to give up the search.

MARION *(indifferently).* If that is your opinion, I quite agree with you. It is the only wise thing to do

BEVERLEY *(very angry).* Because I am now sure that there is nothing to search for. One man is just the same as another to you. All that we are good for *(rising)* is to minister to your love of admiration and love of power.

MARION *(rising and also angry).* And all that we are good for is to minister to your vanity! I—I wouldn't be a man for anything!

BEVERLEY. And I would *be* anything sooner than a woman!

MARION. You are certainly flattering.

BEVERLEY. So are you!

(They look at each other in angry silence for a minute. Then BEVERLEY *with an impatient gesture walks across front of stage, while* MARION *resuming her seat opens the novel which still lies on the table and ostentatiously pretends to read. Presently* BEVERLEY *pauses in front of her, but she does not look up).*

BEVERLEY *(very stiffly).* I am afraid I have been rude. I beg your pardon, Miss Warrington.

MARION *(stiffly also).* It is unnecessary, Captain Beverley.

BEVERLEY *(passionately).* But you would excuse my rudeness if you knew how I love—I mean how I have loved

you, how I have thought of you, dreamed of you, carried your image in my heart, through—through everything! (*His voice fails with emotion. He turns abruptly and again walks across stage.* MARION *looks after him with an expression of tenderness and regret, but when he turns to come back she looks quickly at book. He pauses again before her and speaks more calmly*). I've been a fool, of course, to think so much of a girl who is only a heartless flirt, but I never believed that of you—until now. I thought you had a heart under all your coquetry, and that I could find it. So you have been my comfort and inspiration in hardship and danger and battle. I've dreamed of you as I lay in the trenches and forgot that I was cold and wet and hungry. I've thought of you when the order was given to storm the enemy's breastworks, and carried you with me in the rush upon them. I've been face to face with death and whispered to myself "Marion!" (MARION *looks up at him with a yielding expression and half holds out her hand, when he goes on bitterly*). And all the time you were thinking of me "now and then," together with your "other friends," and finding diversion in flirting with a contemptible coward who hasn't manhood enough to go to the front and strike a blow for his country! Certainly I have been a fool—and more than a fool!

MARION (*rising*). I fully agree with you. You have been a fool, and you are very impertinent besides. How dare you to talk of my flirting with—with—

BEVERLEY (*sarcastically*). Your friend, Mr. George Stone. I dare because everybody knows how you amuse yourself with me, while your other lovers—one must speak of them in the plural!—are facing death on the battle-field.

I really can't say much for your taste. In your place I should try to induce him to put on a gray coat, if only for the sake of appearances. He might go into the quartermasters department. That 's a safe place.

MARION. Oh, you—you—you are perfectly detestable!

(*She looks at him furiously, then turns away and walks in a very dignified manner into the house.* FORREST'S *voice is heard singing* "*Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye!*" BEVERLEY *sits down at table and buries his face in his hands. While singing goes on* MRS. WARRINGTON *and* GENERAL DERING *appear, coming slowly forward.* MRS. WARRINGTON *has flowers in her hands. As music ceases she says:*)

MRS. W. I must go now, my dear General, to put these flowers in water and attend to some housekeeping duties. Dinner will be served very soon. Will you come in and rest until it is ready?

GEN. If you'll allow me, I will remain here. This garden is not only a charming place, but I see Capt. Beverley, with whom I wish to speak a few words.

MRS. W. Then I will leave you. (*She smiles, bows and enters house*).

GEN. (*going over to Beverley, who rises as he approaches*). Sit down, Beverley. I want to consult you. (*He sits down in chair and Beverley resumes his seat on bench*). You know our scouts report the Yankees in great force very near by.

BEVERLEY. Yes, General, I know.

GEN. They outnumber us so greatly that we have no alternative but to fall back until the rest of our division can

come up. But I've thought of a plan by which we may possibly entrap them, cut them off from their main army and give them a severe lesson.

BEVERLEY (*with an air of attention*). That would be capital. How have you thought of setting the trap?

GEN. I've thought—but we might as well put it down at once! Have you paper and pencil about you?

BEVERLEY (*drawing out note-book and pencil*). Here are both.

GEN. Write then (*dictating*): "To Gen. Hill, commanding First Cavalry Division. Learning that the enemy are near this place in overwhelming force I am about to fall back on Elliott's Run, where I shall await your advance."

BEVERLEY (*looking up with surprise*). But I thought—

GEN. Don't you understand? Instead of going to Elliott's Run, which lies east of here, we'll swing around to the southwest and fall on the Yankee force in the rear, from the direction where they least expect us. We can surprise and cut them off in the prettiest manner imaginable if we can get this dispatch into their general's hands so as to mislead him. It must be done in a perfectly natural manner, however, or he will be sharp enough to suspect a trap.

BEVERLEY. One of the couriers must allow himself to be taken prisoner.

GEN. (*musingly*). There is no other way, I suppose, but I'm afraid of their suspecting that, and if they did—well, then the trap would be a trap for us!

BEVERLEY (*also musingly*). What else can we do?

(*They both look thoughtful, and* BEVERLEY *half absently, tears leaf out of his note-book and lays it on open page*

of "Henry Esmond," while reflecting. Suddenly JACK *comes hurriedly out of house, followed by scout, advances to* GEN. DERING *and salutes. The General and* BEVERLEY *start to their feet, and as he rises* BEVERLEY *by a careless motion of his hand closes the novel*).

JACK. General, here's one of my men, who has just brought news that the enemy are at Miller's farm, within six miles of us.

GEN. Ah! (*addressing scout*). Are they advancing?

SCOUT (*saluting*). No, general. They don't know our strength. But their scouts are out in all directions.

GEN. Then they'll learn it soon. (*Looks at Jack*). Major Warrington, have the order, "Boot and Saddle" sounded at once. Captain Beverley, transmit the same order to the other commands. We have no time to lose, but must get away immediately.

JACK (*saluting*). Yes, general.

(*He turns and goes back to house, followed by scout*).

BEVERLEY. And about the dispatch, general?

GEN. (*waving his hand*). No time for that now. We'll attend to it later. Send orders at once to get the men in motion. We don't want to be surprised.

BEVERLEY. No.

(*He picks up his note-book and closing it puts it in his pocket, forgetting he has torn out page, and goes hastily to house. General follows more slowly. Stage remains empty for a moment and then* GEORGE STONE *emerges from behind upper trellis, comes down and bending over table picks up novel*).

STONE. I couldn't hear what they were saying, but un-

less I am mistaken there was a paper left in this book which may be of value. Where is it now?

(*Begins to turn over pages, but has not yet found paper, when* MARION *comes hastily out of house and pauses at sight of him*).

MARION (*with surprise*). What, *you* still here! I thought you went away long ago.

STONE. I went down to the farther end of the garden. There wasn't much pleasure in staying here while those soldiers were absorbing your attention.

MARION. Of course they absorbed my attention. Other men simply don't exist for a Southern woman when there are Confederate soldiers about.

STONE (*bitterly*). I suppose not. Well, I'll relieve you of my presence; but if you have no objection I will borrow this book. I've long wanted to read—"Henry Esmond" again.

MARION (*holding out her hand for the book*). I'm sorry, but I can't let you have it. I haven't finished it myself and I'm at a very interesting part of the story.

STONE (*retaining the book*). I will bring it back to-morrow.

MARION (*shaking her head*). No, you can't have it. I came out specially to get it. (*Aside*). And because I thought Gordon might still be here.

KATE (*appearing in door of house and calling*). Marion! Marion! Come quick! They are going away—Jack and the General and all.

(*She disappears as bugles sound "Boot and Saddle."*)

STONE (*with poorly repressed delight*). Ah, the Yankees are coming!

MARION (*looking at him indignantly*). I believe you are glad! I believe you are—

STONE (*interrupting*). You can believe what you please. But you'd better go if you want to see the last of your Confederate lovers.

MARION (*proudly*). It won't be the last—you may be sure of that. Meanwhile (*she holds out her hand*), I'll trouble you for my book, Mr. Stone.

STONE (*still retaining book and turning over leaves while he looks furtively for paper*). I'll take it into the house for you.

MARION. No, I will accept no further service from you of any kind, and we don't care to see you at Warrington Court any more. Please understand that.

STONE (*finds paper and closing book hastily puts his hands with it behind him*). You will be only too glad to see me when I come to Warrington Court again—if I do come.

MARION. There are no possible circumstances under which I could be glad to see a traitor to his country—and if you welcome the Yankees that is what you are! Meanwhile (*stamps her foot*), give me my book.

(STONE *withdraws paper, holds it in one hand behind him and extends book to her with the other*).

KATE (*reappearing in door*). Marion!

(MARION *snatches book and flies toward house. As she disappears* STONE *brings forward paper and looks at it. Then, with violent gesture, crumples it in his hand and throws it down*).

STONE (*passionately*). Damn it—the wrong paper!

(*Bugles sound again as the curtain falls*).

ACT SECOND.

SCENE—*The interior of a farm-house, a large room with a door and window at back. Also door on right, communicating with another room. In one corner stands a spinning-wheel, there are some plain chairs, and a pine table, with writing materials and papers on it. At left of table sits* CAPTAIN PORTER, *in uniform. At right* STONE *sits. He is in riding dress—breeches, buttoned leggings and short coat, and also carries a riding-whip. For details, see scene plot.*

PORTER (*making some notes*). We are much obliged for your information, Mr. Stone. I 'll mention you to the general and we 'll see that your plantation is protected. And this is all you know? You didn't find out anything about Dering's plans? We 'd like very much to learn something of his movements.

STONE (*regretfully*). I 'm sorry to say that I couldn't find out anything. As I have told you, I was at Warrington Court yesterday when Dering was there, and I even saw him in the garden holding what I am sure was an important conversation with his chief of staff, but I couldn't approach near enough to hear what they said.

PORTER. That was a pity. You heard absolutely nothing.

STONE (*after hesitating a moment*). I heard nothing but I saw something. I saw Gen. Dering dictate a note,

probably a dispatch, which the officer wrote off, and left in a book which chanced to be lying on the table at which they were seated.

PORTER. How did that happen?

STONE. Oh, a scout came up with the news of your being close at hand and put all other matters out of their heads.

PORTER And did you make no effort to get that paper?

STONE. The moment I had a chance I attempted to get it, but I got hold of the wrong paper.

PORTOR (*suspiciously*). The wrong paper!

STONE. I drew out what was only a book mark.

PORTER. And didn't you look for the other?

STONE. I had no opportunity to do so. The book was taken from be by—a woman.

PORTER (*contemptously*). You might have managed to keep it in spite of a woman, I should think.

STONE. I saw no reason to keep it. You see I thought I had the paper.

PORTER (*drily*). I see. But it was a pity! We 'd give a good deal for that paper.

STONE. So would I. (*He pauses an instant*). But it may be possible to get it yet.

PORTER (*sharply*). How?

STONE. By going to Warrington Court, and exercising some compulsion over the person who must have it in her possession.

PORTER. Who is that?

STONE. Miss Warrington. The note was left in a novel which she was reading. If she has opened the book

since she took it from me, she has found the paper, and I 'm sure she hasn't destroyed it.

PORTER. Yet that would be the most natural thing for her to do.

STONE. Perhaps so, but she won't do it. I know her too well.

PORTER. What will she do, then?

STONE. She 'll keep it, and—

(*He breaks off as Sergeant enters and salutes officer*).

PORTER. Well, what is it, sergeant?

SERGEANT. We 've just taken two prisoners, captain.

PORTER. Prisoners of what kind?

SERGEANT. A woman and a nigger, sir.

PORTER. Why on earth did you make prisoners of a woman and nigger?

SERGEANT. They rode into our lines believing it was the Confederate camp, so I held them, thinking they might be conveying information to the enemy.

PORTER (*indifferently*). It 's not likely. They are probably only some of the country people, blundering about.

SERGEANT (*doubtfully*). They don't look like that, sir. The woman 's a lady, and the nigger 's one of the quality kind, and they are well mounted.

PORTER (*impatiently*). I can't be bothered with women and niggers! The men of the country are as much as I can attend to. But you can send these people in and I 'll ask them a few questions before we let them go.

SERGEANT. Very good, sir. But you don't mean to let their horses go?

PORTER. Take the horses, of course.

SERGEANT (*saluting*). Very good, sir.

(*Retires with an air of satisfaction. During this conversation* STONE *has gone to window at back of stage and looked out. He now returns to officer, with signs of excitement in his manner*).

STONE. The game's in our hands, captain! That's Miss Warrington out there!

PORTER. The deuce it is! (*Rises and goes to window, where he looks out, adding as he returns to seat*): What do you suppose that means?

STONE (*excitedly*). It means that she has the paper and is trying to take it to the Confederates. It is just what I would have expected of her.

PORTER. Then she is very obliging to save us the trouble of going after it. If you are right and she proves to have it, I'll not forget to report that we owe our knowledge to you. It will increase our obligations to you.

STONE (*leaning over him and speaking eagerly*). You can repay them all if you will let me deal with this prisioner—after you have taken the paper from her.

PORTER (*laughing*). You have a score to pay off, have you? Very well, I'll turn her over to you as soon as I have extracted my information. But hadn't you better be out of sight at first?

STONE. Yes, yes. Where shall I go?

PORTER (*pointing toward side door*). There's a room where you can wait.

(STONE *goes out hastily, while* MARION *enters, followed by* NED, *and escorted by sergeant, who then retires.*

MARION *wears a riding-habit and is perfectly composed in manner. She walks forward to front of stage and shows great surprise when officer simply looks at her and does not rise. She gazes at him with an expression which changes from surprise to disdain*).

PORTER. What was your object, madam, in coming within our lines?

MARION (*turning to Ned*). Bring me a chair.

(NED *hastens to bring one forward and places it for her. She sits down, lays her whip across her lap and begins to pull off one of her gloves*).

PORTER (*raising his voice slightly*). Why are you within our lines?

MARION (*coolly, without raising her eyes*). By an accident, of course.

PORTER. What accident?

MARION. The accident that you happen to be occupying a position which I thought the Confederates occupied.

PORTER. So you were in search of the Confederate camp?

MARION (*lifting her eye-brows*). Did you suppose I was in search of yours?

PORTER (*growing irritated*). Be good enough to answer my questions directly. Why were you looking for the Confederate camp?

MARION (*coolly*). I don't like to be discourteous even to a—hem! enemy, but I cannot see that that is any business of yours.

PORTER (*severely*). If you are wise you'll understand that it is very much of my business, and unless you tell me

what your object was in going to the Confederate camp I'll hold you a prisoner.

MARION (*a little startled*). If you must know then,—though I don't admit that it concerns you in the least—I was going to see—my brother.

PORTER. Who is your brother?

MARION. Major Warrington, commanding Warrington's Light Horse. You've heard of them, I'm sure.

PORTER. You are the daughter, then, of the rebel, General Warrington?

MARION. I am the daughter of General Warrington, and the sister of Major Warrington, and the cousin of Captain Warrington and Lieutenant Warrington and private Warrington, all of the Confederate army.

PORTER. You seem to be a very rebel family.

MARION. On the contrary, we are a very loyal family—absolutely loyal to our State and to the South.

PORTER (*sneeringly*). Your State! It's to the Federal government your loyalty is due.

MARION. And pray, what created the Federal government but the States, and how can any power create a power greater than itself?

PORTER (*aside*). The very women have the States-Rights argument at the end of their tongues! (*To Marion*). We won't enter into a political discussion. You are rebels from our point of view, and therefore we call you so.

MARION (*scornfully*). You might call us cannibals, but that wouldn't make us so. And by calling us rebels you prove just two things: first, your ignorance—

PORTER (*angrily*). Oh!

MARION (*calmly*). And secondly, your bad manners.

PORTER (*exasperated*). You Southern women are certainly the very devil for impudence and—(*he pauses*).

MARION. Courage perhaps. We couldn't well be Southern women and lack that.

PORTER (*roughly*). You'll need all you have, if you don't tell me plainly what your object was in seeking the rebel camp.

MARION (*with dignity*). I've told you all that you have any right to know.

PORTER. Then I'll see what your servant can tell. (*Turns to Ned*). Come here, boy! (*Ned advances*) What brought you here?

NED. I come with Miss Marion, sah.

PORTER. I know that, but what brought Miss Marion?

NED. She done tol' you. She come to see Mass Jack and Mass—

MARION (*warningly*). Ned!

PORTER (*addressing her sternly*). If you speak to this boy again, I'll send you out and examine him alone. (*To Ned*). Go on. Who else did she come to see?

NED. Gen'l. Dering, who was at we-all's house yistiddy, sah.

PORTER. And what did she want with General Dering?

NED. She never tol' me, sah, but I spects she wanted him to let Mass Jack go home awhile.

PORTER. Now, look here! You know that having come within our lines you are free—

NED (*grinning broadly*). Is I, sah?

PORTER. Undoubtedly. And since you are free you needn't have the least fear of that—young woman. She has no longer any power over you.

NED. Ain't I bleeged to go home with her, sah?

PORTER. Certainly not. Don't I tell you that you are free?

NED (*with expression of delight*). Golly! That's good news!

MARION (*amazed*). Ned!

PORTER. So now tell me exactly what you know about this expedition of hers.

NED. Yes, sah. What I knows is adzactly dis—Miss Marion she come early dis morning an' tol' me to have de hosses ready fuh her an' me to go ridin' and to be sho' and say nuffin to Miss Lucy or Miss Kate, kase dey wouldn't want her to be ridin' over the country, with the Yankees all about so permiscuous. So I gets de hosses ready and Miss Marion she steals out to de stable an' we sets off, an' den she says to me, "Ned, we'se gwine to the Confederate camp. Do you know where it is?" An' I tells her I don't, but I'll fin' out. So I axes one man an' another, an' one says here and another says there an' at las'—

PORTER (*impatiently*). Confound you! What I want to know is whether or not she told you why she was going to the camp?

NED (*solemnly*). No, sah. She never tol' me nuffin 'cept she wanted to go, and what Miss Marion wants we all does.

PORTER. Very well. It's clear that you don't know anything, so you may go.

MARION (*starting up*). And I also?

PORTER. No. I shall detain you until I learn a little more about your object in looking for the Confederate camp.

MARION (*in consternation*). You will detain me, a prisoner! Oh, you can't mean it! I must go home. Mamma will be very anxious—

PORTER (*sarcastically*). You should have thought of that before you left home.

MARION. But what have I done? What right have you to keep me?

PORTER (*with a mocking bow*). The right of force, Miss Warrington.

MARION. O, what a contemptable—what a cowardly thing! I didn't think that even Yankees fought women!

PORTER. When women go out of their way to carry information—

MARION. But I 'm carrying no information. How could I. I haven't any to carry!

PORTER. We 'll make quite sure that you don't carry any. (*Turning again to* NED). Don't you hear? You may go.

NED (*eagerly*). But I wants to stay, Mass Cap'en, if you please, sah. I—I 'd ruther not go back.

PORTER. That 's natural enough, but we can't have niggers hanging around the camp. You must lookout for yourself—only for your own sake, you 'd better take care to keep within our lines.

NED (*effusively*). I will, Mass Cap'en, I will, sah. I 'll take good care not to be ketched outside of 'em.

MARION (*looking at him in sorrowful amazement*). Ned!

NED (*avoiding her eyes*). An' I kin go den, Mass Cap'en?

PORTER (*shortly*). How often must I tell you so? (*He turns and calls*): Sergeant! (*Enter Sergeant*). See this negro off!

(*Exit* SERGEANT *and* NED. MARION *stands motionless, watching them as they go out, and then turns indignantly to officer.*

MARION. Unless you are doing this out of sheer brutality—to show your power over a Southern woman—I can not imagine what your reason is. You have nothing to gain by keeping me a prisoner.

PORTER (*rising, coming around the table and standing before her*). That, Miss Warrington, remains to be seen. I am quite convinced that there is more in your visit to the Confederate camp than merely a desire to see your brother, and the best thing you can do is to tell me at once what that object was, or if you have any papers about you to give them to me.

MARION (*throwing back her head defiantly*). I have none.

PORTER. Take care how you make the assertion if you chance to have any, for in case they are found on you—

MARION (*starting back*). Found on me!

PORTER (*coolly*). Found on you, because you must understand that if you persist in denial it will be necessary to search you.

MARION (*passionately*). You would not dare!

PORTER. You forget where you are.

MARION (*regaining her composure*). I did forget. For a moment I fancied that although in the hands of the enemy, I might be speaking to—a gentleman. I see my mistake.

PORTER (*angered*). By Heavens, you 'd better take care how you give rein to that tongue of yours.

MARION. Oh, I can well believe that one who is so

brave and chivalrous as to insult a helpless woman would be quite capable of anything else.

PORTER (*sneeringly*). We don't pretend to be "chivalrous." We leave that to your Southern gentleman.

MARION. Yes, you leave it to them. There is not the faintest doubt of that.

(*She turns away from him with an air of disdain, and walks to and fro. He stands watching her, with expression of indecision. Presently he speaks harshly*).

PORTER. Miss Warrington! (*She pauses and looks at him*). I know your object in trying to reach the Confederate camp. I know that you have in your possession a paper containing important information. Waste no more time but give it to me.

MARION (*defiantly*). I have nothing of the kind.

PORTER. I don't believe it. Your face, your eyes tell me that you are hiding something. Well, then—I must find it!

(*He advances toward her. She retreats, raising her ridingwhip threateningly*).

MARION (*passionately*). Don't dare to touch me!

PORTER. Then give me the paper.

MARION. My word is enough. I have no information—

PORTER. If you're roughly handled it's your own fault.

(*He rushes at her. She strikes him violently over the shoulders with her whip. He wrests it from her, throws it aside, struggles with her and finally draws paper from her pocket*).

PORTER (*triumphantly*). I knew you had it!

MARION (*panting*). It's only a note which Captain Beverley left accidentally at our house, and—and I wanted to return it to him. I told the truth when I said I had no information. There's no information for *him* in that.

PORTER (*running his eye over paper*). But there's a great deal for us! A dispatch, giving outline of Dering's movements. This is rare good luck! I must go to headquarters at once. Meanwhile, I'll leave you here—

MARION (*despairingly*). Why should you keep me a prisoner?

PORTER. Because you are too dangerous to be set free. If you have played a part to lead us into a trap—and you Southern women are equal to anything!—I warn you that the consequences will be very serious for you.

MARION. They are very serious for me as it is. I've given you information that I would rather have died than have given! I—I only hope it *is* a trap!

PORTER (*grimly*). For your own sake you'd better hope that it isn't. (*He turns and calls:*) Sergeant! (*Sergeant enters and salutes*). Hold this woman a close prisoner until my return.

SERGEANT (*saluting*). Yes, captain.

(*They go out together, and guard is seen through window pacing up and down outside.* MARION *stands for some time in attitude of despair. Then she comes slowly forward, sits down in chair beside table, and crying in despairing tone, "Oh, Gordon!" puts her elbows on table and buries her face in her hands. While she remains so, door of inner room opens behind her.* STONE *comes out and advances to her*).

STONE. Marion!

MARION (*springing up and turning to confront him*). You! (*They face each other for a moment and then she asks in a half-hopeful tone*). Are you—a prisoner, too?

STONE (*looking a little embarrassed*). No. (*She draws back farther from him and he adds hurriedly*). I—I'm here on business.

MARION. Business! What business can a Southern man have in the enemy's camp?

STONE. My business is to obtain protection for myself and my friends.

MARION. How? In *business* (*she emphasises the word*) there is always value given for value received. What are you giving for Yankee protection?

STONE. That doesn't matter—

MARION (*passionately, advancing nearer*). It's all that matters! For what you are giving is your honor? Oh, George (*her voice takes a tone of keen sorrow*) I never really believed you could be a spy—a traitor—

STONE (*recovering himself and with an air of bravado*). Call it what you like! The truth is that I don't care to fight for losing causes—

MARION (*with intense scorn*). You don't apparently care to *fight* for any cause!

STONE (*ignoring the interruption*). And the South is bound to lose in this contest. She hasn't the resources to keep it up, and the other side has them. There's the case in a nutshell.

MARION. I know as well as you that we haven't resources, but we have men—such men as the other side can't buy with all their money!

STONE (*coolly*). And these men are being killed every day.

MARION (*with a gasp*). So they are, but—but they are not all gone, and as long as they can fight and the women can work, the South will never be subdued.

STONE (*obstinately*). There's just one end bound to come, I tell you.

MARION (*turning upon him*). And it is men like you who help to bring it! But if it were to come, do you think these invaders would gain anything? Do you think the South will not always remember her dead heroes—and those who killed them?

STONE (*sneeringly*). The South will forget her heroes quickly enough when there 's money to be made and power to be gained by forgetting.

MARION. Never.

STONE. And she 'll do more than forget—she 'll disown all they are fighting and dying for.

MARION (*passionately*). If I thought so, I would be ashamed to call myself a Southern woman, and I should pray to die with the last man who carries the Southern Cross!

STONE (*shrugging his shoulders*). All this would be very fine if you could hope for success—

MARION (*more passionately*). Oh, you—you traitor, not only to your country but to all that is high and noble, don't you know that success isn't everything? Of course we will succeed—we simply can't fail with such men fighting for us! But even if your prophecies are fulfilled, if we are overpowered by numbers, failure can't change the justice of our cause, it can't tarnish the splendid deeds of our sol-

diers, or put a single stain on the spotless glory of our flag!

STONE (*still sneering*). Such sentiments are all very well now, with your flag still flying and your men in the field, but they won't be very profitable—after defeat.

MARION (*proudly*). When the South learns to count profit and loss where honor is concerned, her foes can bring her no deeper degradation. But let me tell you that if the worse comes to pass, if her soldiers are all slain, her flag lowered, and—and the men who remain forget and disown what we are doing and suffering now, then her women will take up that flag to honor it and all that it stands for. And the heroes who died under it will never be forgotten, as long as a Southern woman lives to keep their memory in her heart.

STONE (*with unwilling admiration*). You are capable of it—no one doubts that. But all this is useless! I only want to make you understand my position.

MARION. I understand it perfectly. You care only for what is "profitable." So did Judas.

(*She turns and walks contemptuously away from him, towards left of stage*).

STONE (*following her and speaking angrily*). It would be more profitable for you to be a little less insulting. You forget that you are not surrounded by gray coats at present.

MARION. I am not likely to forget it. But don't *you* forget that they will come back.

STONE. You needn't hope for it. But, even if so, they are not here now, and you (*he comes closer and stands over her, speaking with emphasis*) are in my power.

MARION (*turning and looking at him coolly*). Indeed!

When did it come to pass that a spy became a commanding officer, even in the Yankee army?

STONE (*furiously*). You may sneer as much as you like. I repeat that you are in my power—you have been handed over to me—

MARION. In reward for your highly honorable services, I suppose.

STONE (*trying to restrain himself*). It's a good thing for you that you are a woman—

MARION (*quickly*). I think, rather, that it is a good thing for you. If I were a man I would kill you. A betrayer of his country deserves death.

STONE. You would kill me? And yet you know that I love you.

MARION. I don't know it! And I won't allow you to say it! I won't be dishonored by the love of a—

STONE (*seizing her wrist*). Don't say that word again? Even you may go too far. I'll listen to no more insults. You are not now playing queen at Warrington Court.

MARION (*standing perfectly still and looking at him with disdainful eyes*). But you are returning the hospitality of Warrington Court—as one would expect of you!

STONE (*dropping her arm and turning away*). You make a man forget everything—except yourself! And not even your scorn can make him do that. Marion, you know that I love you, and you know that you have encouraged me to believe—

MARION (*interrupting*). No, no! I never encouraged you. I was only amusing myself. There was nobody else—and your admiration gratified my vanity. It was all mis-

erable vanity—nothing more—and now I'm punished—oh, I'm bitterly punished and humiliated besides!

(*She turns away from him and walks to chair on right and drops into it.* STONE *watches her for a moment, standing with his back against table. Then he speaks meditatively*).

STONE. I suppose it's true. I suppose you were only amusing yourself—and I was only of use to fill a gap while there were no uniforms about—but (*advancing, bending over her and speaking in warning tone*) your play was deadly earnest to me and it's going to be deadly earnest to you now. If you don't promise to marry me—(*Takes her hand*).

MARION (*springing up and snatching her hand angrily from him*). Marry you! I'd die sooner!

STONE (*coolly*). It doesn't happen to be a question of dying. If you don't promise to marry me I will see that Warrington Court is burned to the ground.

MARION (*scornfully*). Do you think my father would have me preserve his house by dishonoring his name? Burn Warrington Court if you like!

STONE (*coldly, continuing*). And your mother will be sent North as a prisoner—

MARION. You dare not touch her! What has she done?

STONE. Together with yourself, she will be held on a charge of conveying information to the enemy.

MARION (*with vehement gesture*). You know it is false!

STONE. The proof is in the paper taken from you in this room.

(MARION *stands stricken, looking straight before her and saying to herself, "My mother!"* STONE *watches her for a moment with an expression of triumph. Then he advances toward her*).

STONE (*quietly*). It is as I told you, Marion. My turn has come. I can do what I have said—that is, I can cause it to be done—or I can protect you—save your home, see that your mother suffers no indignity, make everything easy for you. And all I ask in return for doing this is that you will be to me in earnest what you were when you were "amusing yourself," and that you will promise to marry me.

MARION (*looking at him*). And you would trust me if I promised—under these circumstances?

STONE. Yes, for I am sure you would never break a promise once given.

MARION (*proudly*). Thank you for such belief in my honor. I will justify it. Do what you like—or may have power given to you to do—to Warrington Court, to myself and to my mother. Nothing on earth would induce me to marry you. That is my last word.

(*She walks in a dignified manner over to table and sits down at left side of it, with her face averted from him. He follows, and with one hand on table bends over her*).

STONE (*threateningly*). You had better consider. I mean all I have said. (*She takes no notice of him*). You may not believe me, but you are, and will remain, absolutely in my power. (*He pauses, she still ignores him*). Your pride will not save you, but I am giving you a chance

to save yourself. If you don't take it now you won't have it later! (*He pauses again, she is still silent and motionless*). Then take the consequences! (*brings his fist down violently on table*—and don't forget that you have brought them on yourself!

(*He goes out by door where guard is walking.* MARION *remains motionless for a moment longer. Then, gazing in front of her, she echoes his last words in a heart-broken tone, "Yes, I have—brought them—on myself!" Spreads her arms out on table, buries her face upon them and so lies, overwhelmed. A minute of silence follows. Then side door cautiously opens and* NED'S *head appears. He looks around, catches sight of guard passing window and retreats suddenly. After an instant he puts his head out again, sees* MARION *and loudly clears his throat. Just as she lifts her head, guard appears at window again, and* NED *again draws out of sight. She looks around, sees nothing, and sighing deeply sits in attitude of despondency, gazing vacantly before her. For the third time* NED'S *head appears, when guard is out of sight, and this time he calls, "*MISS MARION!" MARION *springs to her feet and advances toward him.*

MARION. Oh, Ned!—how did you get here?

NED. I come back an' clum' in by de window to ax you what you's gwine to do?

MARION (*sorrowfully*). I don't know. What can I do? If I could climb out of the window, and you had the horses ready—

NED (*indignantly*). Dese Yankees done stole our hosses!

MARION. Oh, the miserable thieves! They've taken my Gypsy!

(*Guard appears at window and* NED'S *head disappears, to re-appear when guard has passed again*).

NED (*still indignantly*). They took Gypsy and Stonewall, too, an' tol' me I could walk—an' dat's what dey calls freedom!

MARION. I thought you had forsaken me, Ned, when that Yankee told you that you were free—I really did. But I ought to have known better.

NED. Yes'm (*he grins*). I fooled him, kase I thought he'd let me stay heah, an' I hadn't no notion of leaving you by yourself. What'd Miss Lucy an' Mass Jack say to me ef I did?

MARION. Perhaps—(*Guard appears and* NED *again disappears. She stands in a reflective attitude until his head is seen again. Then she says quickly:*) Ned, there's no good in your staying here with me. You can't help me to escape, and if you did we couldn't get away, since they've stolen our horses. But you are at liberty, so you go home as fast as you can and tell Miss Kate that she must find a way to let Captain Beverley know that the Yankees have taken from me a paper which he left in a book in our garden yesterday. Can you remember that?

NED. Yes'm. De Yankees has got a paper what Cap'en Beverley lef' in our gyahden yistiddy.

MARION. Tell her that I was trying to find him in order to give it to him, when they took me. It's an important dispatch and General Dering must know that the Yankees have it. Now go—quick, quick! And tell mamma

that I'm—I'm safe, and she mustn't worry about me. Only let Kate make haste to send word about the dispatch to the Confederate camp. And if she sends you, Ned, you must be sure to find the right camp this time.

NED (*nodding emphatically*). I will—sho'!

(*He disappears finally, as guard again re-appears at window.* MARION *throws up her arms with a despairing gesture, clasps them behind her head, and, coming slowly back to chair, falls in attitude of despair on floor beside it, as the curtain falls.*

ACT THIRD.

SCENE FIRST.

SCENE—*A forest glade with drop-scene at back representing woods, and thickets of pine or cedar, arranged to conceal right and left entrances, but leaving centre space clear. Immediately in front of thicket on right lies the trunk, or part of the trunk, of a fallen tree. This and all about it should be made to look as wild and natural as possible.*

Into this glade from right enter KATE *and* NED. KATE *wears a dress such as a girl would naturally wear at home in the morning—a lawn, very simply made, or something of the kind. There are briars and brambles trailing to her skirt, she carries her hat of rough straw in her hand, and has an appearance of weariness and exhaustion.* NED *is dressed in this, as in the other acts, as a "house servant" would be dressed—neatly, yet with no effect of spruceness. He is probably wearing some of Jack's discarded clothing. He exhibits every appearance of deep sympathy and concern for Kate's fatigue. When they enter the glade, emerging from behind thicket, she perceives fallen tree and throws herself down on it, with an air of exhaustion. The light is that of late afternoon.*

KATE. I'm so tired, I don't feel as if I could take an-

other step! And I'm afraid we're going in the wrong direction to find the Confederate camp. Oh, Ned, what are we to do?

NED (*sympathetically, dropping on the ground beside her*). I knows you is jes' fit to drap, Miss Kate, but I reckon the only thing we *kin* do is to go on. Dem niggers what I talked wid awhile back says de Confed'rates is suttenly out in dis direction, an' we's boun' to come up wid'em soon.

KATE (*despairingly*). What do you call soon? It seems to me we've walked fifty miles since we left home, and we haven't found them yet.

NED (*shaking his head*). No ma'am. We ain't walked more'n ten, kase we's made so many short cuts.

KATE. The short cuts were the worst. I thought I should have died in that swamp!

NED. But we was 'bleeged to go dat way, kase de roads about dar was jes' full of Yankees.

KATE. But how do you know we aren't lost? There's no road here.

NED. Law, Miss Kate, you can't lose dis chile. Me an' Mass Jack's been rabbit-huntin' an' coon-huntin' all over dese woods. I knows whar we is, an' we'll come out in de big road in a little while.

KATE (*rising*). Well, we must go on. I may drop down dead with fatigue, but if I do, Ned, you mustn't stop. You must just leave me and find the camp, and tell Mass Jack about that paper. Promise me you'll do that if I fail.

NED (*who has also risen, shaking his head vheemently*). I can't promise dat, Miss Kate. I can't leave you lyin'

dead an' go sarchin' for Mass Jack. What'd he say to me when I foun' him?

KATE (*pausing and speaking with great earnestness*). Ned, you *must* promise! If you don't I—I'll haunt you after I'm dead.

NED (*startled*). Good Lawd, Miss Kate, don't you do dat! I'll—I'll promise you anything ruther than fuh you to harnt me.

KATE (*solemnly*). Then remember that it is a promise. If I drop dead, you are to leave me and go as fast as ever you can to find your Mass Jack.

NED. Yes'm. I—I promises. I'll do it sho'. But (*anxiously*) you ain't gwine to drap dead, is you, Miss Kate?

KATE. Not if I can help it—but I feel as if I might—Oh! (*she starts*) I hear men's voices! They may be Yankees. Let us hide, Ned—quick, quick!

(*They hurriedly conceal themselves behind thicket on right. Enter* JACK *and* FORREST *from left*).

JACK. I was sure I heard voices in these woods, and if there are any Yankee scouts about we want to capture them. The general is very anxious that the enemy shan't learn our exact whereabouts.

FORREST. When we dismounted I, too, thought that I heard voices in this direction. We couldn't both have been mistaken and we must find the talkers. Spies are worse than scouts. (*He goes behind thicket, there is a cry, a scuffle and he emerges, dragging Ned*). I've found this negro suspiciously concealing himself.

JACK (*starting*). Ned!

NED. Oh, bress de Lawd, it's Mass Jack! (*As Forrest releases him he turns and runs back toward bushes, crying*), Miss Kate!—Miss Kate! Here's Mass Jack hisself!

JACK. Has the fellow gone mad? Ned—Ned!

(KATE *emerges from bushes, without her hat, and rushes toward him*).

KATE. Oh, Jack!

JACK. Kate!

(*She falls into his arms, and he supports her with evident amazement and concern*).

JACK. What is the meaning of this? Kate, my dearest girl, how do you come to be here?

KATE (*half-laughing, half-crying*). Oh, Jack, I—I'm so glad to find you! I—I was afraid we never would find you. We've been looking for you all day.

JACK. What has happened? But never mind—rest a little before you try to talk!

(*He supports her to fallen tree, and sitting beside her makes her lean against him, while* FORREST *kneeling on other side fans her with his hat*).

FORREST. She's completely done up!

KATE (*making an effort*). No, no—I'm only a little tired. Ned and I left the Court this morning and we've walked—Oh, we've walked miles and miles and miles!

NED. We come all de short cuts, Mass Jack—by Carson's Mill, an' long de head o' de mill-pon', an' through de Cypress swamp.

JACK. Good heavens! You've done that on foot, Kate! Why didn't you ride?

NED. De Yankees is done tuk our hosses, Mass Jack—stole de las' one of 'em!

JACK. Then the Yankees have reached the Court!

KATE. Yes. Just before we left a party of them came and carried off the horses—all our dear horses, Jack! So I had to come on foot—there wasn't anything else to do—for I've important news.

JACK. What is it? If it's only that the Yankees have reached the Court—

KATE. Oh, it's much more than that. A dreadful thing has happened! The Yankees have got one of Gen. Dering's dispatches!

JACK (*starting*). The devil they have? How?

KATE. And they've got Marion, too!

JACK (*amazed*). Got Marion!

KATE. Yes, yes. They are holding her a prisoner, and (*despairingly*) there's no telling what they'll do to her—

FORREST (*soothingly*). Oh, they won't do anything to her—they can't, you know. But how did it happen that she was made prisoner?

KATE. It was all on account of the dispatch!

FORREST. What had Miss Warrington to do with that?

KATE. A great deal—they took it from her!

JACK. But how came she to have it?

KATE (*impatiently*). It's a long story and I can't tell it to you now. Marion sent me word to make haste and let General Dering know. (*Rises*). We must get on—or (*sitting down again*) perhaps you had better go, and leave me here—

JACK. It's likely we'll leave you! We'll take you right along with us to the camp and you can tell your story as

we go. Come, sweetheart! (*Lifts her up*). Where's your hat?

KATE (*glancing around vaguely*). Oh, I don't know, and it doesn't matter. Where are your horses?

JACK. We left them on the edge of the woods with an orderley. I'll put you on his horse. Do you think you can ride on a cavalry saddle?

KATE. You've forgotten a great deal, or you wouldn't ask the question.

JACK. It's true. I ought to have remembered that you can ride anything—"from a broomstick to a flash of lightning."

KATE (*laughing*). The first certainly and a cavalry saddle besides.

NED. An' how's I gwine, Mass Jack?

JACK. Lieut. Forrest will take you up behind him—eh, Forrest?

FORREST. Of course. He deserves to ride with a major-general. Come, Ned!

(*All go off on left, and, after stage is clear, singing is heard behind drop scene, which slowly rises to disclose*).

SCENE SECOND.

(*Confederate camp. Background of woods. A tent at right of stage. At left a group of soldiers in cavalry uniform taking their ease, while singing, "Tenting on the old Camp-ground." To make good effect, there should be a double quartette of voices. This scene ought to be as realistic as possible. After second verse, men begin to talk*).

FIRST SOLDIER. I wonder what we are waiting for,

boys? It isn't like the general to be so quiet, with the Yanks close at hand! Why the devil ain't he up and at 'em!

SECOND SOLDIER. He knows what he's about—you may bet your rations on that. He's only waiting for something —reliable information, most likely—and then he'll fall on 'em when they're looking for him least. That's Dering's way.

SERGEANT. Well, we can't hear the call to "Boot and Saddle" too soon for me.

(*Enter* BEVERLEY *from tent*).

BEVERLEY (*coming forward*). You'll hear it soon, boys, None of the scouts in yet, sergeant?

SERGEANT. Not yet, captain. The major went out himself not long ago, but he isn't back yet.

BEVERLEY. I hope he won't get caught. He's daring to rashness, the major. Well, boys, while we wait let's have a song or two. I'll sing with you.

SERGEANT. That's good, boys! Let's have our own song—the cavalry song!

FIRST SOLDIER (*who is also leading voice*). Yes, our own song—here goes!

(*He begins "The Cavalier's Glee," and others join in with great spirit*).

"Spur on, spur on, we love the bounding
Of barbs that bear us to the fray,
The charge our bugles now are sounding,
And our bold Dering* leads the way.
The path of honor lies before us,
Our hated foemen gather fast,

*Correctly, "Stuart."

At home bright eyes are sparkling for us,
We will defend them to the last.
At home bright eyes are sparkling for us,
We will defend them to the last.

"Spur on, spur on, we love the rushing
Of steeds that spurn the turf they tread,
We'll through the Northern ranks go crushing,
With our proud battle-flag o'erhead.
The path of honor, etc."

SERGEANT (*rising and looking off*). Yonder comes the major now—and with a woman!

SOLDIER. Maybe she's bringing information. The women often do.

(*Enter from left* JACK, KATE FORREST *and* NED. BEVERLEY *advances toward them*).

BEVERLEY. Well, Warrington, we've been thinking that perhaps you had met the enemy and were theirs. But it seems you've made a capture. (*Starts*). What, *Miss Conyers!*

KATE (*holding out her hand*). I know you are surprised to see me, Captain Beverley.

BEVERLEY (*taking her hand*). Very much surprised, but more pleased that you have found your way to our camp. Perhaps you've come to bring us news of the exact whereabouts of the enemy!

KATE (*sorrowfully*). Yes, I bring you that. They are at Warrington Court.

BEVERLEY (*startled*). At Warrington Court! And your cousin—your aunt—where are they?

KATE. Aunt Lucy is at the Court, but Marion—Oh, Captain Beverley, Marion is a prisoner in the hands of the Yankees!

BEVERLEY (*incredulously*). A prisoner! Impossible! You mean that she is at the Court—

KATE. No. She left the Court yesterday and went into the Yankee lines—and the wretches have kept her.

BEVERLEY (*amazed*). But why on earth did she go into their lines?

KATE. Because she was looking for you.

BEVERLEY (*more amazed*). Looking for me!—in the Yankee lines?

KATE (*impatiently*). Of course I don't mean that she intended to look for you *there*—or that she meant to go there herself. She was trying to find the Confederate camp.

BEVERLEY. Oh, she was trying to find the Confederate camp! But why—

KATE. I'll tell you why!

(*She makes a motion with her hand dismissing* JACK *and* FORREST, *then turns and sits down on one of the stumps at left of stage, where soldiers were seated. These have withdrawn at upper entrances, all except sentry, who is pacing across back.* JACK *and* FORREST *go up stage and sitting down on log, or rocks, talk together.* NED *sits apart.* BEVERLEY *seats himself on a stump beside* KATE. *He has an air of great perplexity*).

BEVERLEY. I can't imagine why Miss Warrington should have been looking for me.

KATE. Men *are* stupid—of course I've always known that—but still I should think you might imagine.

BEVERLEY. I suppose I'm particularly stupid, for I really can't.

KATE (*regarding him meditatively*). Yes, I think you must be particularly stupid. I've—well, I've thought so for some time.

BEVERLEY (*laughing a little*). It's kind of you to tell me—even as late as this. If you had told me earlier I might—possibly—have improved in intelligence.

KATE (*shaking her head*). I'm afraid not. I gave you a chance the other day—and what use did you make of it?

BEVERLEY. I beg your pardon. What chance did you give me?

KATE. Didn't I take everybody away and leave you alone with Marion in the garden at the Court?

BEVERLEY (*with the air of one on whom a light has dawned*). Then that was why you wanted to hear Forrest sing?

KATE. Yes, that was why I wanted to hear Lieut. Forrest sing. You see I thought you might be glad of an opportunity to say a few words to Marion—alone.

BEVERLEY (*stiffly*). You were exceedingly kind and—er—very thoughtful. Of course it was stupid of me not to recognize my obligation to you sooner. And really it was a great obligation. You helped me to discover, once and for all, what a fool I have been.

KATE (*sarcastically*). Well, that was a service for which you should thank me. But are you sure you understand quite how much of—er—

BEVERLEY. How much of a fool I am? There may be depths of my folly I haven't sounded yet, but I think I know pretty well. For one thing, I've found that Miss Warrington doesn't care in the least for me, and that I've been an utter fool whenever I've dreamed that she did.

KATE (*addressing vacancy*). And yet people talk of the superior intelligence of man!

BEVERLEY (*rising impatiently*). But you were going to tell me why Miss Warrington went into the Yankee lines. My stupidity certainly had nothing to do with that.

KATE (*rising also and speaking with emphasis*). It had simply everything to do with it.

BEVERLEY (*staring at her*). I—don't understand.

KATE. No, I don't suppose you do. I'm beginning to believe that you don't understand anything. You may be a very brave man, Captain Beverley, but you are certainly a very dull one!

BEVERLEY. We've settled that, haven't we! Don't let us discuss it longer, but tell me about Miss Warrington! What has my dulness—

KATE (*severely*). And carelessness!

BEVERLEY. And carelessness, if you say so, to do with the fact of her being a prisoner?

KATE. That is what I began to tell you. (*Sits down again while Beverley remains standing, looking anxiously at her. She looks at him with a judicial expression, as she continues*). When I left you in the garden with Marion, you know what happened. You quarreled with her.

BEVERLEY. I shouldn't put it exactly that way—but (*desperately*) to get on, I'll agree. Yes, I—that is, we quarreled. She told me plainly that she detested me.

KATE. And I suppose you believed her!

BEVERLEY. I hadn't any alternative. She was very positive about it.

KATE. That's the way of a man. He exasperates a woman into saying—anything. And then he believes her!

BEVERLEY. I think the exasperating was on the other side, but—never mind! We'll take it for granted that I was a brute, as well as a fool—what then!

KATE (*with the air of one enumerating facts*). Then you went away without one word of regret or apology, or giving Marion a chance to tell you that she hadn't meant what you provoked her into saying—

BEVERLEY (*reduced to a condition of abject apology*). I had to go, you know. Our orders were imperative—

KATE (*scornfully*). Oh—orders! Well, you went away, and poor Marion nearly broke her heart with grief—thinking that you might be killed before she ever saw you again.

BEVERLEY (*eagerly*). Do you mean that she really—cared?

KATE. I would not let you know how much she cared, except that it is necessary in order to explain what she did.

BEVERLEY (*sitting down again*). I can't tell you what happiness you give me—

KATE (*interrupting him*). My object isn't at all to give you happiness—quite the contrary. Please keep quiet and listen to me.

BEVERLEY. I am listening.

KATE (*severely*). Except when you are interrupting. As I was saying, then, Marion was simply heart-broken. I never saw her so overcome with grief, or her pride so completely broken down—

BEVERLEY. Oh!

(*He rises, as if unable to restrain himself, but as* KATE *looks at him reprovingly, sits down again, forcing*

himself by a strong effort to be quiet. When he is still, she goes on:)

KATE. In the middle of the night I was waked by her coming to the side of my bed. She was so sad and pale that she looked like a spirit in the moonlight! I told her she ought to be asleep, but she said she had not been able to sleep for thinking of how she had parted with you. (*Beverley again half rises, but again sits down as she looks reprovingly at him*). So, to try and divert her thoughts, she opened a book which she had been reading in the garden in the afternoon and there she found—do you know what she found, Captain Beverley?

BEVERLEY. How should I know?

KATE. You must have a very poor memory. She found a dispatch written by you, giving Gen. Dering's plans.

BEVERLEY (*springing up*) By Jove! So *that* is what became of that paper!

KATE. Then you did miss it?

BEVERLEY. Certainly I missed it, and couldn't conceive what I had done with it. But I remember now—of course I left it in that book! (*Takes a quick turn across stage*). And Marion found it! What did she think?

KATE. She thought the consequences might be very serious for you. That's why she waked me up to tell me about it. "It's a very important paper," she said. "He will be dreadfully worried when he finds he has lost it, and perhaps he'll be blamed, and it was all my fault—"

BEVERLEY. Her fault!

KATE. That's Marion! She is always ready to take the blame of anything on herself. She was sure that it was

because of your quarrel with her that you had forgotten the paper—

BEVERLEY. I suppose it was. A man is likely to be distracted in mind when he is terribly unhappy. But there is some excuse for my carelessness in the fact that it wasn't—

KATE. Oh, Marion made excuses enough for you, but she was afraid the loss of the dispatch might bring you into dreadful trouble. So she determined that she would take it to you. "It will be an amends," she said, "and give me an opportunity to tell him that I didn't mean all I said—"

BEVERLEY. Oh, Marion!—Marion! (*In passionate agitation he moves away, but almost immediately comes back*). And then—then?

KATE (*more sympathetically*). I tried to dissuade her from going to the Confederate camp, for we knew that the Yankees were very near—and I thought I had succeeded. She went away, and I went to sleep, but when I waked in the morning she was gone. She had taken Ned and started out early on horseback to find the camp and *you*. Hours passed and Aunt Lucy and I grew very uneasy, although we didn't really believe that any harm could happen to her, but at last Ned came and told us that they had blundered into the Yankee camp and that the Yankees were holding Marion a prisoner because they had taken Gen. Dering's dispatch from her.

BEVERLEY (*eagerly*). *Did* they take it? Are you sure?

KATE. Of course they took it—don't I tell you so? But Marion sent me word to lose no time in letting you know what had happened, so we slipped away, Ned and I, just as the Yankees came to the Court, and—and that's all!

BEVERLEY (*grimly*). No, by Heaven it isn't all! They have fallen into a trap.

KATE (*rising*). A trap!

BEVERLEY. In which we'll crush them! (*Turns abruptly*). Jack!—Forrest!

(JACK *and* FORREST *rising quickly advance toward him.* JACK *takes his arm with an air of sympathy*).

JACK. I knew it would be a hard blow to you, old fellow, so Kate and I agreed she should tell you alone. Don't take it too much to heart! Such an accident might happen to any one.

BEVERLEY. It's not an accident—or rather, it's an accident of rare good luck! Miss Warrington couldn't possibly have served us better than by taking that dispatch into the hands of the enemy.

JACK. What the deuce do you mean?

BEVERLEY. Just what I say. She wanted to serve us, God bless her! and she has served us far better than she knew. Don't you understand? (*Jack and Forrest are staring at him blankly*). It wasn't a genuine dispatch! It was intended to fall into the hands of the Yankees! But we couldn't find a way—

JACK. Oh, I see! Well, Marion has found the way for you.

FORREST. Hurrah for Miss Warrington!

BEVERLEY. The general must know this at once!

(*Starts toward tent, but* FORREST *who is a very boyish young fellow, springs forward*).

FORREST. Why not let Miss Conyers tell her own story, Beverley? Let's bring the general out! He likes ladies.

I'll tell him that a lady wants to see him. (*He goes over to tent, raises flap, salutes and says*): General, a lady out here desires to see you.

GENERAL (*within tent*). This is no time or place for ladies. Tell her she had better go home.

FORREST. She'll consider you very ungallant.

GENERAL. Confound gallantry! I've no use for women in the field. Send her away, Forrest. I can't be troubled with her.

FORREST. I think you'll have to see her, general. She brings important news. There's a dispatch of yours fallen into the hands of the enemy.

GENERAL. What! (*He emerges from tent*). A dispatch of mine in the hands of the enemy!—what dispatch? Where is this lady?

FORREST (*indicating Kate*). Here she is.

GEN. (*striding forward*). Miss Conyers! Why, my dear young lady, (*takes her hand*), what has brought you here? And what's this about a dispatch?

KATE. It was a paper Captain Beverley left at the Court, General.

BEVERLEY. It was the dispatch to Gen. Hill which you dictated to me in the garden, General, and which we intended to fall into the hands of the enemy. The sudden news of the Yankee advance made me forget that I had taken it out of my note-book. So it was left in a book that lay on a table where I wrote it, and Miss Warrington finding it after our departure, naturally thought it of great importance, and set out to return it to me. She has fallen into the hands of the Yankees and has sent word that they have seized the paper—

GEN. (*eagerly*). Is there no doubt of that? Is it certain they have obtained it in such a manner as to make them believe it undoubtedly genuine?

BEVERLEY. I don't see how they could doubt it. Miss Warrington certainly believed it, and her sincerity would make itself felt.

JACK. Yes, I 'll warrant that Marion's sincerity made itself most unmistakably felt.

GEN. But how did the Yankees learn that Miss Warrington had that paper?

KATE. They searched her—the miserable wretches!

GEN. But that does not explain why they suspected that she had anything of the kind in her possession.

KATE. They must have learned it from George Stone, who was at the Court the day you were there.

GEN. That implies that Stone is a traitor.

KATE. So he is—an absolute traitor. Ned saw him with the Yankees, (*turns toward Ned*) didn't you, Ned?

NED (*advancing*). Yes'm. I saw him an' heered him boff?

GEN. What does this boy know about the matter?

KATE. Everything. We owe all our knowledge to him. He was with Marion when she went into the Yankee camp. They let him go and he brought us the news of her capture, with a message urging me to let you know that the paper had been taken.

GEN. Where was Miss Warrington when he left her?

KATE. At Miller's farm house, general, and breaking her heart with grief because she thinks the Yankees have your plan.

GEN. So they have, but I think that like a hornet it

will sting them. If they act on that information, we've got them! They'll move on to Elliott's Run expecting to find us there, and meanwhile we'll fall on them in the rear, take them by surprise and cut them to pieces.

FORREST (*enthusiastically*). It's a glorious chance!

BEVERLEY (*gravely*). Miss Warrington has certainly given us a great opportunity, but we don't know how dearly she may have to pay for it if we prove immediately that the despatch taken from her was intended for a trap. We must remember that we are dealing with a foe who has no chivalry and she should be our first consideration.

GEN. We will certainly act with discretion and regard to her safety. But I want to question this boy a little, if you are sure he is trustworthy.

JACK. You can trust him, general. Take my word for that. (*Turns to Ned*). Ned, tell the general all you know.

NED. Yes, sah. (*He turns to general*). When me an' Miss Marion was tuk prisoners, de Yankee off'ser 'lowed as dere was no reason for keepin' me an' I could go. But I hadn't no notion of leavin' Miss Marion, so when de guard tol' me to clar out, I jest dodged aroun' an' got to de back o' de house, whar I clum in de window. Den I heered Mass George Stone in de next room talkin' to Miss Marion—

BEVERLEY. Stone!

JACK. Are you sure?

NED (*very positively*). Yes, sah. I'm jest as sho' as dat I'm talkin' to you dis minute! It was Mass George Stone, an' he was threatenin' her owdacious, tellin' her as how she'd been put into his hands an' he could do jest what he pleased with her, an' ef she wouldn't promise fuh to marry him—

BEVERLEY (*violently*). The infernal scoundrel?

GEN. Be quiet, Beverley! (*To Ned*). If she wouldn't marry him, then what?

NED. Then he were gwine to burn down Wahington Court.

JACK (*violently*). The damned traitor!

KATE (*laying her hand on his arm*). Wait, wait! Go on Ned!

NED (*with evident enjoyment of his story*). Miss Marion, she stood up to him, an' tol' him to burn away, kase she wasn't gwine to marry him, not fuh nuffin. Den he tol' her he could send her an' Miss Lucy to de Norff as prisoners fuh givin' information an' Miss Marion tol' him dat was a lie, an' he said dat dere'd been a paper tuk from her in dat room what proved it. An' den Miss Marion tol' him to go an' do what he like, kase she wouldn't marry him fuh no consideration. An' he tol' her he was sut'enly gwine to do it all, an' dat's de Lawd's truff—sho'!

BEVERLEY (*furiously*). When we catch George Stone, I'll hang him, if I'm court-martialed for it next day!

GENERAL (*sternly*). You will do nothing of the kind, Capt. Beverley. When Stone is caught, he is to be brought to me.

JACK (*impetuously*). General, I beg leave to take my legion on a special service.

BEVERLEY. And I beg leave to accompany them.

GENERAL. Both requests are refused. You are excusable for making them, but a moment's thought will tell you that with the enemy so close at hand this is no time for special services. It is a hard saying, but a soldier must think of his duty before he thinks of sister or sweetheart.

KATE (*proudly*). I can answer for Marion, general, that she would not wish to be thought of before duty.

GENERAL. I am sure of it. But that I will allow no special service on the part of these officers does not mean that I will make no special effort on her behalf. On the contrary, I will direct a very special effort to her rescue, as soon as we are quite certain where she is. (*He turns to Forrest*). No scout in yet, Lieutenant?

FORREST (*looking off*). One coming now, general, I think.

(*Scout, booted and spurred, comes hurriedly on stage and going up to General, salutes*).

SCOUT. Come to report, general!

GENERAL (*quickly*). Well—what have you learned?

SCOUT. Enemy have moved as far as Warrington Court and are there now in force. It is supposed they are about to move on, but they haven't moved yet. The officer in command is quartered in the Court, and it is reported he has declared his intention of burning the house when he leaves, and sending the ladies North as prisoners.

NED (*nodding*). Dat's hit—dat's what I done tol' de gen'l!

JACK (*beside himself with rage*). General, like Beverley, I'm ready to be court-martialed rather than leave my mother to such—

GENERAL (*interrupting*). Major Warrington, I'll put you under arrest if you say another word. (*He turns to scout*). Then Miss Warrington is at the Court with her mother?

SCOUT. So I've heard.

GENERAL (*turning to Beverley*). There isn't a moment to lose. We must move at once, and strike them before they leave Warrington Court. It's the only chance to save the house and perhaps the ladies. Order the men into the saddle.

BEVERLEY (*saluting*). Yes, general.

(*He goes off hastily, and bugles are heard sounding, "Boot and saddle." General turns to* JACK).

GENERAL. You see, Warrington, there will be no need of special service or court-martials either. The whole brigade will fall on them—like a thunderbolt. But what are we going to do with this brave young lady?

KATE. Take me with you, general, of course.

GENERAL. What!—into action. That won't do!

KATE (*positively*). It must do! I simply won't be left.

GENERAL. You are a true Southern girl—fearless of danger, and born to command. Well, we'll take you along, as our Joan of Arc to bring us victory.

KATE. You need no one to bring you victory. You bring that to yourselves.

GENERAL (*gravely*). Pray that we may! Well, I must leave you to your cousin. I shall not see you again until after we have fought and—possibly not then, so let me give you a soldier's thanks for all that you have done to serve us. (*He takes her hand*). God bless you!

KATE (*holding his hand between both of hers*). God bless and keep *you*, General!

(*Exit* GENERAL *into tent.* JACK *turns and calls*).

JACK. Orderly! (*Soldier comes forward and salutes*).

Saddle my chesnut roan for Miss Conyers, and bring a pistol-belt and cap. Be quick about it.

ORDERLY (*saluting*). Yes, sir. (*Goes off*).

KATE (*siezing his arm*). Oh, Jack, this is a greater happiness than I ever dreamed of, to be really going into battle with you! It's better than standing on the house-top and watching you.

JACK. I always knew you were brave enough to be a soldier, Kate, but all the same I wish you were at home and in the cellar.

KATE (*enthusiastically*). I don't, I'm glad to have "jined the cavalry." And do you think we'll be in time to save the Court and rescue Aunt Lucy and Marion?

JACK. It won't be our fault if we're not—that's all I can tell you! (*Turning as Orderly re-enters bringing cap and belt with pistol, and takes belt from him*). But here's something you must put on if you are going with us. It's possible you may need it. (*Puts belt around her and while she buckles it, places cap on her head*). Now, here comes your horse—you must spur on with us at a hot pace!

KATE. The hotter the better!

(*As she says these words, the soldiers, wearing swords return to stage and group around her at centre, singing with great spirit the last verse of "The Cavalier's Glee:"*

" Spur on, spur on, we love the flashing*
Of blades that struggle to be free,
'Tis for our Sunny South they 're clashing,†
For household gods and liberty.

*Swords drawn and brought to carry. †Raised and clashed. Come to carry.

The path of honor lies before us,
Our hated foemen gather fast,
At home bright eyes are sparkling for us,
We will defend them to the last.‡
At home bright eyes are sparkling for us,
We will defend them to the last."

‡Come to guard.

CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT FOURTH.

(SCENE—*Drawing-room of Warrington Court, a large, handsome apartment, furnished in the style of the middle of the century. It should also contain a few pieces of still older furniture. A long, modern couch has a prominent place, but care must be taken not to crowd the scene, since a great deal of action takes place on it. A wide door is at centre of flat, and on either side of this hang old portraits. There are two windows with draperies on right side, and between them stands an old-fashioned pier-table, with mirror above it. In left corner should be a tall, carved mantel, bearing clock, pair of silver candelabra and perhaps one or two vases. The hands of the clock point to seven. In middle of left side of room is a door with bell-cord hanging beside it. Before this door, but well out in floor, stands a round mahogany table of Colonial model, with large arm chair near it. On the table, books and a number of daguerreotype cases are grouped around a large alabaster vase. A lady's work-basket also stands on one side of table.*

MRS. WARRINGTON *and* MARION *are discovered.* MRS. WARRINGTON *seated in large chair, knitting on a soldier's sock. She has an air of composure, in striking contrast to* MARION, *who is walking restlessly up and down floor. Both are dressed in simple gowns such as ladies would wear at home.*

The light is that of a summer evening).

MARION (*pausing before her mother*). Oh, mamma, how can you sit there so quietly, and things so dreadful with us?

MRS. WARRINGTON (*quietly*). If I could help them, my dear, I would do so. But since I can't, isn't it better to finish this sock than to walk up and down the floor, as you are doing?

MARION. I don't know. It may be better, but how *can* you? (*She begins to walk to and fro again*). Here we are, prisoners in our own house—

MRS. WARRINGTON. But that is an alleviation of our situation! If we are to be prisoners anywhere, it is certainly better that we should be prisoners in our own house than elsewhere.

MARION. It seems to me worse. It is so insulting!

MRS. WARRINGTON (*tranquilly*). If one despises insults, one rises above them.

MARION (*despairingly*). But I can't despise them, and so I can't rise above them. And I can't forget either that you wouldn't be treated this way if I hadn't gone into the Yankee camp with that paper!

MRS. WARRINGTON. It was certainly unfortunate that you went into the Yankee camp, and still more unfortunate that they got possession of the paper and so learned General Dering's plans. But you were quite right to make the effort you did. I would rather suffer than that you had failed to make it.

MARION. But *it* failed. And that is what maddens me! I could endure being a prisoner, but the thought that I've given these wretches information of General Dering's plans, and that they are going to use it against him

and Jack, and—and Gordon Beverley, makes me wild! (*Walks nervously to and fro*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. I have never understood why the Yankees should have suspected that you had the dispatch.

MARION. George Stone told them—I'm sure of it! He was here the day the General came, he listened and spied in the garden, and I found him with the book in his hand, searching for the paper he had seen Captain Beverley leave in it. Oh! (*she throws up her arms*) if only I had a weapon, I would kill George Stone, if they hanged me for it the next minute?

(*With the last words she throws herself despairingly down on couch. Mrs. Warrington rises and going to couch bends over her sympathetically*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. My child, my child, don't grieve so! You've tried to do your best—and Dering will not be taken by surprise. He never has been. He's always where the Yankees don't look for him.

MARION (*lifting her head*). But they know where to look for him now, and it's my fault.

MRS. WARRINGTON. No—not your fault, only an accident. Or if there is fault in the matter it was Captain Beverley's. There's no excuse for his leaving that paper.

MARION (*rising to her feet*). It wasn't his fault. I won't have him blamed. I had been tormenting him. Mamma, (*laying head on Mrs. Warrington's shoulder*) I'm a wretch—simply a wretch!

MRS. WARRINGTON (*soothing her*). I wish there was more wretches like you in the world. Well, I won't blame Captain Beverley, then, if you will stop blaming yourself.

Trust him to repair his care—well, his forgetfulness. And then, you know—there's Jack!

MARION. Oh, yes, there's Jack, and we don't think Jack's Light Horse could be defeated. But what if they are to learn the lesson of defeat for the first time—through me?

MRS. WARRINGTON. We won't think of it. We won't believe it possible. Keep up your heart, my child, keep up your heart.

MARION. It's hard to do—when they are going to burn our dear old home and send us North as prisoners.

MRS. WARRINGTON. The house is not burned yet and we are still here—and Kate may bring our men.

MARION (*turning away and nervously beginning to walk again*). But it was such a desperate venture for Kate to try to reach the Confederate lines across the country, on foot—with only Ned to accompany her.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*resuming her seat*). She is very brave and Ned is very faithful. I think she will succeed, and it was so fortunate that she got away when she did—just before the Yankees come in force—with you. And remember that although we are prisoners they might treat us worse. At least they spare us their society.

(*All through this speech sounds of loud talk and laughter and clinking glasses should be heard from off stage*).

MARION (*pausing at door in centre and listening*). But I hear them now—carousing in the dining-room and drinking our wine!

MRS. WARRINGTON (*earnestly*). I hope they will drink it all.

MARION (*astonished*). Mamma!

MRS. WARRINGTON. It may keep them here until our soldiers come! I told Mom Elsie to give them your father's finest wine, and the French brandy which is a hundred years old. I hope she did as I told her. Here she is now! (*Enter* MOM ELSIE *from door on left, looking very angry*).

MOM ELSIE. I done what you said, Miss Lucy. I gib dem debils Mass Tom's fine ol' Sherry an' Madeira an' his ol'est brandy; an' Jasper say dey's drinkin' like fishes—

MRS. WARRINGTON. So much the better, Mom Elsie.

MOM ELSIE. I ain't so sure o' dat, Miss Lucy. Mass Tom's gwine to be powe'ful mad 'bout dat wine an' brandy when he comes home.

MRS. WARRINGTON. If he finds nothing gone of more importance than his wine and brandy, Mom Elsie, I think he'll be very glad.

MOM ELSIE. I'd like to put pizen in it fuh 'em—dat's what I'd like to do! Mis'eble, owdacious trash—ain't got no manners—jist as impident as if de house belonged to 'em!

MRS. WARRINGTON. Never mind about that. See that they have everything they want to eat and to drink—especially to drink. Don't you understand? We want to keep them here until—

MARION (*seizing* MOM ELSIE *and speaking eagerly*). Until Miss Kate and Ned can bring our men! That's what mamma wants, Mom Elsie! And you must help—help to save us and Warrington Court. For they say that when they leave they are going to burn the house—

MOM ELSIE (*starting*). Fo' de Lawd—burn de house!

MARION. And take mamma and me away, to send us North as prisoners.

MOM ELSIE (*flinging up her hands*). Ain't dey debils! Ain't I right to call 'em debils? Fo' de Lawd—take you an' Miss Lucy 'way!

MARION. Unless Kate can bring our men in time—Listen! They are calling now!

(*Voices are heard off shouting: "Here you nigger! Where's that damned old nigger?"*)

MOM ELSIE (*nodding her head*). Dat's dem—dat's de gen'elmunly way dey talks! Dey's callin' Jasper, and I reckon what dey wants is more liquor. I'll give 'em all dey wants. Bress de Lawd, Mass Tom's got a cellar full!

(*Goes out by left with air of great determination*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. If the cellar saves us it will indeed be something to be thankful for, that your father laid it in. And if I know anything of men they will find it rather difficult to leave that wine.

MARION. The question is can it keep them until our men come?

(*She resumes her walk and for a minute there is silence. Then enter* GEORGE STONE *from centre.* MARION *turns her back on him and walks over to window on right, where she stands gazing out.* MRS. WARRINGTON *puts down her knitting and looks at him calmly*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. Only a moment ago, Mr. Stone, I remarked that it is an alleviation of our situation that we are at least spared the society of our jailors. Are we to be denied even that alleviation?

STONE (*pausing before her*). I am sorry that you regard me as one of your jailors, Mrs. Warrington.

MRS. WARRINGTON. I regard you as not only chief among them, but also as something far worse—a traitor to your country and her cause. Therefore, I hope you will be good enough to spare us your society.

STONE. It strikes me that you are not exactly in a situation to dictate as to your society.

MRS. WARRINGTON. To dictate, no. But even a prisoner may be allowed to protest against unnecessary indignity. It is quite true that I am unable to enforce my request that you will leave this room, but if you were a gentleman the fact that I cannot enforce it would be enough to make you regard it.

STONE (*walking to chair on other side of table and sitting down*). If you like, you may consider me not a gentleman.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*resuming her knitting*). The conclusion is evident.

STONE (*angrily*). It is very bad policy on your part to insult me in this manner, for I have it in my power to do a great deal for you.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*without lifting her eyes*). Our obligations to you are already so great that we do not desire their increase.

STONE (*fiercely*). Damn your sarcasm, madam! You wouldn't object to being under obligations to me to save your home, I suppose?

MRS. WARRINGTON. Since I owe it to you that my home is in danger, I certainly do not care to countenance any pretended attempt on your part to save it.

STONE. Whether you owe its danger to me or not, I can save it. I can see that the house is spared and that

you and your daughter are left undisturbed. And I will do so in—in consideration of our old friendship—

MRS. WARRINGTON (*looking at him*). So the memory of our old friendship has revived with you!

STONE (*ignoring her speech*). If you will pledge yourselves in case of the return of the Confederates, to give no information of what has occurred, but to protect my interests by testifying that I have protected yours.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*glancing at Marion, who has turned around*). I think the Confederate forces must be near at hand.

MARION. I am sure of it.

STONE (*rising in violent anger*). I understand what both of you imply. You believe that I am impelled to this offer by fear and interest.

MRS. WARRINGTON. It is possible that such an idea may have occurred to us.

STONE (*walking across stage*). Well, you are mistaken! There are no Confederate troops near here, and there's not the least possibility of there being any at present. They are in full retreat in every direction and the Federals are about to move on in pursuit of them. Thanks to the paper taken from Miss Warrington (*turns toward Marion*), we know where Dering is and are about to strike and demolish him. Therefore it is not interest, in any immediate sense, which has induced me to make this offer to you—

MRS. WARRINGTON (*sarcastically*). Only interest in a remote sense—we understand.

STONE. You understand very little, madam, or you would consider your own interest, and take a different tone towards me.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*rising*). You are mistaken, Mr. Stone. I understand perfectly that it has occurred to you that when the Confederate forces come—

STONE (*interrupting fiercely*). I've told you that's not likely to be soon—if ever.

MRS. WARRINGTON. Soon or late, you know that when they come, it will be difficult for you to save your own home if the blackened walls of Warrington Court testify against you, and you are prudent enough to believe that it is better to preserve your property than even to revenge yourself on a woman for despising you.

STONE (*restraining himself with an effort*). Are you trying how you can exasperate me? You forget what is in my power.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*with dignity*). I forget nothing. But my daughter and myself cannot enter into the bargain you propose. We will not bind ourselves to hide your treachery or to protect your interests. If we did so, we should, like yourself, betray our country by aiding you to continue your work as a spy.

MARION (*advancing*). It is as I told you yesterday. We set our honor above our interest—which is a sentiment hard for you to comprehend, I know.

STONE (*regarding her with exasperation*). You'll regret this.

MARION. Not half so much as you, believe me!

STONE (*turning to Mrs. Warrington*). I came into this room with the determination to save you from all that threatens you, but you make it impossible for me to do so. If you refuse to pledge yourselves to what I ask, why then—(*pauses*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. Then what?

STONE. You may prepare to leave your home immediately, and forever.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*calmly*). That is as God may order, not as you do.

STONE. You'll see. *I* am ordering here.

(*He goes out violently.* MRS. WARRINGTON *and* MARION *look at each other*).

MRS. WARRINGTON. This settles it, my child. Unless our men get here very quickly—more quickly than perhaps we can hope for—our fate and that of our home is sealed. Look around. (*She glances around*). We shall never see these dear old walls again, if we go out from them now.

MARION (*quietly and proudly*). We cannot purchase their safety by dishonor.

MRS. WARRINGTON. No.

(*Enter Yankee soldier. Speak as to prisoners*).

SOLDIER. The general orders your removal. You will prepare to leave immediately.

MRS. WARRINGTON. Can we go to our rooms to make some preparations?

SOLDIER. My orders are that you will get ready here. You can send for your bonnets.

MARION. For nothing else?

SOLDIER. Nothing that you cannot take with you on horse back.

MARION (*to her mother*). I will ring for a servant. (*She rings and enter from left Mom Elise*). Mom Elsie, go to our rooms—mamma's and mine—and bring us hats and veils and a wrap apiece, and put up in two traveling-

bags all that we will need for a journey. Try not to forget anything, and (*leading her aside and speaking with emphasis*) take as long a time about it as possible!

MOM ELSIE (*who looks startled and subdued*). Yes, missy, I will!

(*She goes out by left. Soldier stands at door in centre. Mrs. Warrington and Marion come down to front of stage*).

MARION (*despairingly*). There's no hope. Our men can never get here in time to save us!

MRS. WARRINGTON. I have given up hope of their coming. All we can do now is to bear ourselves with dignity and courage. These Yankees shall not see us quail. We must remember that we, too have our share in supporting the honor of the South.

MARION (*drawing herself up*). Yes, yes. We will support it. They shall never see us quail.

(*Enter Mom Elsie carrying bonnets, wraps and bags. Marion goes hurriedly toward her, and while taking things speaks aside reproachfully*).

MARION. Why did you come back so soon?

MOM ELSIE (*whispering excitedly*). Oh honey, de Confed'rates is comin'!

MARION (*seizing her arm*). Are you sure? How do you know?

MOM ELSIE. Scip done tol' me—jest dis minute.

MARION. How does Scip know?

MOM ELSIE. He's been a-lookin' out. He clum' a tree an' seen de gray coats comin' de oder side o' de woods. He say dey ain't mor'n a mile off—

MARION (*anxiously*). Did he tell the Yankees?

MOM ELSIE. La, missy, Scip ain't as big a fool as dat. He jest come to me an' whispered de news.

MARION. I must tell Mamma.

(*She goes over to* MRS. WARRINGTON, *puts bonnet on her head, and while tying strings speaks low but distinctly*):

MARION. Our men are coming. Scipio says he has seen them—about a mile off.

MRS. WARRINGTON (*clasping her hands*). If it is true they should be here soon!

MARION. We must try to delay as much as possible.

(*She goes to mirror between windows, puts on hat, takes it off again, pretends to arrange hair.* MRS. WARRINGTON *at table meanwhile takes things out of bag and consumes time rearranging them and talking to* MOM ELSIE. *Soldier watches proceedings indifferently until enter* CAPTAIN PORTER *and* STONE.

PORTER (*to soldier*). Why don't you bring the prisoners out? Their horses are ready.

SOLDIER. They are not ready, sir.

PORTER. They must get ready. We can't be delayed. (*To Stone*). Orders have been issued to fire the place as soon as we leave it.

STONE (*looking significantly at Mrs. Warrington*). I heard them issued.

(MRS. WARRINGTON *does not seem to hear, but calmly continues her work of delay*).

PORTER (*addressing her*). You must come, madam.

MRS. WARRINGTON. Not without the few things we are allowed, I suppose?

PORTER. Yes, without them, if necessary. (*Turns to Marion*). Do you hear, Miss Warrington? You must come at once!

MARION (*turning with hat in hand*). You can't expect me to go bareheaded.

PORTER. You can put on your hat, or go without it, as you like.

MARION. What charming consideration!

PORTER (*rudely*). We have something else to do besides feeding your vanity on what you call consideration.

MARION. No doubt. I suppose you have to capture some more women and burn some more houses. It's no wonder you don't care to be delayed in such brave work!

PORTER (*angrily*). Enough of this insolence! You are prisoners—

MARION. Are you afraid that your courtesy might possibly lead us to forget the fact?

PORTER. And if you don't come, you will be taken by force.

MARION (*scornfully*). What is implied in that threat has more effect than you can imagine! (*She turns back to mirror, puts on hat and ties veil very slowly, glancing out of window the while*).

STONE (*tapping officer on shoulder*). She has some object in this delay.

PORTER. We'll end it. (*To soldier*). Bring that woman out!

(*As soldier advancing seizes* MARION, PORTER *himself takes hold of* MRS. WARRINGTON'S *arm, saying rough-*

ly, "Come, madam!" STONE, *stepping forward, takes her other arm).*

STONE (*in a tone of triumph*). You perceive *now* who is ordering!

(MOM ELSIE, *seeing her mistress about to be led out, rushes forward and stands in front of door, facing group with outstretched arms. She addresses* PORTER).

MOM ELSIE. Oh, Mistah Capt'n, fuh de blessed Lawd's sake! You ain't gwine to carry off my mistis'? She ain't done nuffin'! Dere neber was a better lady!——

PORTER (*violently*). Get away, you fool!

MOM ELSIE. Oh, Mistah Capt'n, don't take Miss Lucy an' little missy away—what's dey done? (*Throws herself on her knees*). Oh, Mistah Capt'n, fuh de Lawd's sake!—

PORTER (*to soldier*). Take her away!

(*Soldier releasing Marion, who immediately darts back to window and looks out, seizes Mom Elsie, who screams and resists. At this moment the Southern yell is heard at distance. There are shots and cries, a crash of glass, as of table overturned in next room, and a sound of feet rushing out. Then more shots and the yell drawing nearer*).

MARION (*at window*). Our men!—our men. Here they are!

PORTER. The rebels!

(*He draws his sword and rushes to door in centre where he pauses for an instant as if listening. Yells and shots draw nearer, and followed by soldier, he rushes out. Stone starts as if to follow them, but at door hearing*

shots very near, turns hurriedly back and moves across room toward door at left. Mrs. Warrington quickly intercepts him and stands before the door).

MRS. WARRINGTON. No, Mr. Stone. You will wait and see who is ordering!

(*While Stone hesitates, looking at her furiously, Mom Elsie still on her knees by couch, where soldier dragged her, is rocking to and fro, crying excitely "Lawd hab mussy on us!" Shots and cries diminish as if in pursuit of flying enemy, and Marion turns from window as Beverley rushes in by centre door, sword in hand.*

BEVERLEY. Marion! Thank God we're in time!

MARION (*running to him*). There wasn't a moment to spare, Gordon—not a moment! They were just taking us out, just about to burn our house, and it was to him (*she points to Stone*) we owed it all!

BEVERLEY (*turning to Stone*). Ah, he's here—the cowardly traitor!

(*He advances toward* STONE, *who retreats a few steps, putting table between them*).

STONE. You can't touch me! I've tried to protect these ladies and their property—

BEVERLEY. Lying can't save you, miserable cur that you are!

(*He advances around table.* STONE *draws a pistol and and covers him threateningly*).

STONE. I'll not be taken! I'll kill you if you touch me!

BEVERLEY. You're in haste to be hanged!

(*He rushes forward.* STONE *fires and misses.* BEVERLEY *seizes him,* STONE *fires again and* BEVERLEY *staggers back and falls.* MARION *with a scream rushes forward and falls on her knees beside him*).

MARION. Oh, Gordon! Gordon!

(STONE *turns to dash from room, by centre door but* MRS. WARRINGTON *seizes him.*

MRS. WARRINGTON. No—no! You shan't go!

STONE (*hoarsely*). Get out of my way!

(*He struggles to throw her off, but* MOM ELSIE *comes forward to help her. Between them they hold him and prevent his using the pistol, which, in the struggle,* MOM ELSIE *takes from him. He is, however, dragging them toward door, when* KATE *suddenly appears in it. She is flushed and excited and wears her soldier's cap.*

KATE (*pausing*). Aunt Lucy!

MRS. WARRINGTON (*panting*). Help me, Kate! Help me to hold him! He has killed Gordon Beverly!

KATE. Oh! (*She draws pistol from her belt and covers Stone with it*). Thank Heaven, Jack gave me this! Now George Stone, stand still, or I'll shoot—and you know that I can shoot! Aunt Lucy, get away, for if he moves I'll fire!

(STONE *looks around for his pistol, but* MOM ELSIE *holds it behind her*).

MOM ELSIE (*shaking her head indignantly*). No sah,

you ain't gwine to git dis no more—killin' Mass Gordon and tryin' to kill Miss Lucy! You owdacious—

STONE (*imploringly*) TO KATE. Let me go! I've done nothing. You've no right to hold me—

KATE. Open the window, Aunt Lucy! Call the soldiers!

(*As* MRS. WARRINGTON *opens window*, STONE *again addresses* KATE):

STONE. I tell you I've done nothing! I only shot him (*he indicates Beverley*) in self-defence.

KATE. If you take another step toward this door, I'll shoot *you* in self-defence.

MRS. WARRINGTON. Yonder are soldiers! (*Calls*). Here! Come here!

STONE (*to Kate*). Oh, for God's sake, let me go! Let me escape!

KATE (*stamping her foot as he makes an attempt to advance*). Stay where you are or I'll fire!

STONE (*in tone of desperation*). They'll hang me—they'll certainly hang me!

MOM ELSIE. An' sarve you right ef dey does!

(*Enter* FORREST *and soldiers.* KATE *turns to them*).

KATE. Take this man. He's a traitor and a spy, and has just shot Capt. Beverley.

SOLDIER. The damned scoundrel!

(*Two of them seize* STONE, *while* FORREST *goes over to* BEVERLEY, *whom* MARION *has meanwhile half-raised to her lap, while with a handkerchief she staunches his wound*).

FORREST (*kneeling beside him*). Is he badly hurt?

MARION (*despairingly*). I think he's dying.

BEVERLEY (*lifting himself*). No—no—not dying! I'm not very—badly hurt—(*Falls back*).

MARION (*to Forrest*). Oh go—go for a surgeon!

FORREST (*rising and turning to soldiers*). Keep the prisoner here. I'm going for a doctor.

(*As he goes out at centre*, NED *enters*).

NED. Mass Jack an' de gen'l's comin', Miss Lucy. (*Starts back*). Good Lawd! Is Mass Gordon kilt?

MRS. WARRINGTON. No, no. But he's wounded. Quick, Ned, draw out this couch, and lift him to it.

(NED *and* MOM ELSIE *hastily draw couch to centre of stage, while* MRS. WARRINGTON *arranges cushions at head of it.* STONE *has meanwhile been led to right upper corner of room, where soldiers stand guard over him.* KATE *goes and kneels on floor by* MARION, *as if consoling her. When* NED *has drawn out couch he comes forward to lift* BEVERLEY, *but the latter, rejecting assistance, rises to his knees and then to his feet. As he turns after rising, he catches sight of* STONE *and staggers a step or two towards him*).

BEVERLEY. You've scored this point, you traitor! But—but if you've killed me, the cause you've betrayed can never die. My comrades will take up my sword and—and (*he suddenly perceives Marion, who has come to his side*). Marion! (*He falls on couch*).

MARION (*wildly, dropping on her knees beside him*). Oh, he's dead! Gordon, Gordon, can't you hear me say

how sorry I am I ever hurt you, and how much I love you!

(MRS. WARRINGTON *going to her shows sympathy and busies herself with* BEVERLEY, *while enter* GENERAL *and* JACK *at centre*).

GENERAL (*advancing*). What's this I hear?—Beverly shot.

MRS WARRINGTON. I am grieved to say he is, general.

JACK. And by that infernal traitor, Stone! (*Looks around and sees Stone*). General, with your permission, we'll take this scoundrel out and hang him at once!

GENERAL. Certainly not, Major Warrington. It's enough that we hold him a prisoner. I'll attend to him presently. First we must learn how seriously Beverley is wounded. Who has gone for the surgeon?

SOLDIER. Lieutenant Forrest, sir—and here he comes!

(*Enter* FORREST *with surgeon, who goes to couch and kneels down to examine* BEVERLEY. *All look at him anxiously.* MRS. WARRINGTON, KATE *and* MOM ELSIE *are grouped at head of couch. The general and* JACK *are at the foot.* MARION *kneels at side, toward audience. Surgeon and* FORREST *are on farther side.* NED *stands beside them with expression of anxiety*).

GENERAL. Is he fatally wounded, doctor?

SURGEON. I think not. He has fainted from loss of blood, but the wound is not severe.

MARION. Oh, thank God!

SURGEON (*bending over patient*). See!—he is reviving.

BEVERLEY (*rousing and seeing Jack starts up*). Jack! What are you doing here? The Yankees—

JACK. Are in full retreat. We never thrashed them more thoroughly. That's enough for you to know at present.

BEVERLEY. Not quite enough. Marion!

MARION (*bending forward*). Here I am, Gordon. Oh, forgive me for having been so—abominable.

BEVERLEY. You never were abominable. You were always—adorable. But, was I dreaming, or did I really hear you say that you love me?

MARION. Oh, Gordon, don't you know it?

BEVERLEY. It's worth being shot to know it. But that scoundrel Stone—did he get away?

MARION. No. Kate came in and held him with a pistol till our men could take him.

JACK (*turning toward her*). Kate!

KATE (*holding up pistol*). You see I found good use for your pistol, Jack.

JACK. You could not possibly have found better. General, do you know that we owe the capture of Stone to Miss Conyers?

GENERAL. It doesn't surprise me. Nothing you could tell me of the courage and daring of Miss Conyers would surprise me. And as for Miss Warrington—we owe it to her that we took these rascals so completely by surprise.

MARION (*turning toward him eagerly*). Oh, general!—do you mean it?

GENERAL. Haven't you heard it? Then I'm glad to have the pleasure of telling you that when you carried that dispatch of mine into the Yankee camp you did us the greatest service imaginable. It was intended to lead the enemy into a trap, and accomplished its purpose admirably.

MARION (*clasping her hands*). Oh, now I don't mind anything I suffered since the results are so glorious—that is (*she looks at Beverley*) all but this. And this wouldn't have been but for that traitor. (*She points to Stone*).

GENERAL. I'll settle with him now. (*He turns*). Men, bring forward the prisoner.

(*Soldiers bring forward* STONE, *who tries to wear an air of bravado*).

STONE. I wish to state, General Dering, that I shot Captain Beverley purely in self-defence. He attacked me grossly, unprovokedly—

GENERAL (*interrupting*). The enemy might say the same, Mr. Stone.

STONE. But I am not one of the enemy.

GENERAL. Why were you found with them, then?

STONE. I came to obtain protection for my property.

GENERAL (*curtly*). On what ground?

STONE. On the ground that I have not borne arms for the South.

GENERAL (*sarcastically*). I don't think that we've lost much, or the Yankees gained much, by that. And I believe they would be of the same opinion. You must have had a better reason to offer for the protection of your property.

STONE. My mother is a Northern woman. General Taylor, of the Federal Army, is her cousin.

GENERAL. General Taylor is not to be congratulated on *his* cousin. But I doubt if even that claim would suffice. I'll see for myself what grounds are specified in the paper you obtained. Give it to me! (*Holds out his hand*).

STONE. I didn't obtain any paper. I had a—verbal assurance of protection.

GENERAL. You are not a very successful liar, Mr. Stone. (*To soldiers*). Search him.

(*Soldiers search him, take a paper from his pocket and hand it to general*).

GENERAL (*opening it*). Here is the paper you have so singularly forgotten. Yet it is very explicit. (*Reads*). "In consideration of valuable services rendered to the Union cause, Mr. George Stone is entitled to the protection of the United States' forces whenever necessary, for himself, his family and property, and is exempt from all demands of every kind. Signed by the general commanding Thirteenth Brigade, U. S. A." That's rather a damning document for a Southern man to have in his pocket, Mr. Stone! (*Stone stands silent*). What are the "valuable services" mentioned here? (*Stone is still silent*). Probably you are wise in not attempting to explain them. Well, your family must do without this return for them. And without your society also. We'll see that you don't render any more such services at present.

STONE (*apprehensively*). What are you going to do with me?

GENERAL. I am going to send you to Richmond, to be dealt with as one convicted of furnishing information to the enemy. And also of causing the arrest of these ladies, the shameful treatment to which they have been subjected and the threat to burn their house, the execution of which only our timely arrival prevented. If I gave you what you deserve for all this, but especially for your treachery, it would

be a short shrift and a long rope, but since the treachery has failed I will let the authorities at Richmond deal with you.

STONE (*imploringly*). Mrs. Warrington, won't you say a word for me?

MRS. WARRINGTON (*who has come to side of general*). What word, George Stone, have you left me to say! Your treatment of my daughter and myself I could forgive, but your treason to the cause for which your people are in arms, your life-long friends and associates shedding their blood like water, is a different matter. There are offences which it is a crime to condone, and no Southern woman will ever forgive the man who forgets that his first duty, in success or in defeat, is to this noble, bleeding land—our South.

GENERAL. Well said, madam! (*To soldiers*). Remove the prisoner.

(*Soldiers lead off* STONE. *As they go out the general turns to* MRS. WARRINGTON).

GENERAL. Now I have a pleasanter duty to perform. I should like to promote these young ladies for gallant and meritorious service, but since the War Department would have, I fear, a prejudice against issuing commissions to them, I see only one way of accomplishing the promotion, if you will permit me to mention that way.

MRS. WARRINGTON. I shall be happy to hear anything you have to suggest, general.

GENERAL. Then I venture to suggest for Miss Conyers promotion to the command of the Commander of Warrington's Light Horse and Miss Warrington to that of ranking

officer of my Chief of Staff. Seriously, one must see how things are with these young people and in war delays are not wise. It is evident, that, owing to his wound, Captain Beverley will be quartered with you for some time, and Major Warrington can have a day or two's furlough whenever we are not too busy chasing the enemy—

JACK (*gratefully*). Thanks, general. I fully agree with you that delays are dangerous, so whenever Kate is ready—

KATE (*putting her hand in his*). I'm ready now, Jack, and remember I expect to go into battle with you!

BEVERLEY (*anxiously*). There's no need to wait till I've recovered. Marion—

MARION. Not the least, Gordon.

GENERAL. Very good. Why not have the wedding at once? Otherwise, some of us may possibly never have the pleasure of witnessing it.

MRS. WARRINGTON. I am quite willing, general. A wedding to the sound of drum-beat and cannon is no strange thing in days of war.

MOM ELSIE (*throwing up her hands*). Good Lawd! Gwine to marry boff de young mistresses right away! I mus' see 'bout de weddin' supper, an' git out de champagne. Dem Yankees neber got dat!

(*As she speaks, soldiers bearing battle-flag, enter and form group behind couch.* BEVERLEY *raises himself*).

BEVERLEY. Comrades, you are in time to welcome two new commanding officers. (*He indicates Marion and Kate, whom soldiers laughingly salute*). And let us never forget that whatever else we may lose, we have to thank God for the faith and devotion of our women.

MARION (*springing to her feet and taking the flag*). And let *us* never forget that we have now and always to thank God for the heritage of imperishable honor and glory left by the men who have fought and died under the Southern Cross!

(*The soldiers cheer, and to the swelling strains of "Dixie"*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

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